This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3 3433 07481628 5

150
Fld

CATHARINE COLE'S BOOK

WITH AN INTRODUCTION
BY
M. E. M. DAVIS.

FOREWORD
BY
JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

CHICAGO:
WAY AND WILLIAMS.
MDCCCXCVII.

217909B

COPYRIGHT, 1897,
By MARTHA R. FIELD.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
OVER THE HILLTOPS.	19
QUEEN ANNE FRONTS AND MARY ANN BACKS.	33
A LITTLE GOOD-BYE TO ARCADY.	43
SPRING FEVER.	55
THE MODERN TURK.	65
THOUGHTS OF HAPPIER DAYS.	79
"CHARGE IT."	93
OLD THINGS.	101
BABETTE.	115
ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN.	131
ROSES OR REGRETS.	143
PERFUMES OF PLACES.	151
THE LADIES OF ROSEMARY.	163
FOR RENT: A THREE-ROOMED COTTAGE.	183
A LITTLE CHRISTMAS SERMON.	195
THE SONG OF THE NEW YEAR.	203
TWO OLD BROWNIES.	213
GIFTS OF ROSES.	231
BY THE WINDOW.	243
HAVE WE GOOD MANNERS?	251
FOR COMMONPLACE WOMEN.	263
DOUDOUCE'S MOTHERS.	277
SIMPLE LIVING.	295
SOCIAL SUCCESS.	309
NARROW LIVES.	323
THAT KISS.	337
CIC'LY'S STORY.	349
OLD HOME LONGINGS.	373

INTRODUCTION.

It is a shady, old-fashioned street—a "green Cathedral aisle of untrimmed trees"—which leads from the wide city Boulevard to the "brown shell of a house" where these Letters were written. The busy world races back and forth along the Boulevard, with an ever-increasing clatter of progress and prosperity, of pride and parade. The Street dozes, tranquil and unchanging, beneath an over-arching sky which is as blue as the blue of a baby's eyes. The fences that border it are over-hung by tangled masses of climbing roses, and alder, and trumpet-vines—and there the birds sing, year in and year out. Nigger-heads—yellow, rank and saucy—blossom in the ditches; grass grows along the brown wheel-ruts. The trees, with a fine disdain of man's inventions, have thrust out their mossy roots and unsettled the birches of the old sidewalks, so that the passer-by must needs walk warily.

This is the Street.

The high-porched house where Catharine Cole

lives, has, for a decade and a half of years, seemed somehow to be the Other End of the street; though in truth the flower-set way wanders on until it loses itself in the swamp. So many pilgrims have trod the broken sidewalks, seeking the brave, strong, sympathetic woman whose power to help and to comfort was boundless! Youth, with elastic step and bounding heart, eager to clasp the Hand of the Magic Pen; Age, downcast and wretched, longing for the never-withheld word of cheer; hither they came — the poor, the rich, the happy, the despairing — pilgrims, as to a shrine, travelers, as to a Place of Rest.

In this cosy, time-worn old house Mrs. Field may be said to have really begun her life-work. The young journalist, a widowed mother, and a breadwinner, had indeed gained a foothold elsewhere, but here were written those earnest and sympathetic letters which have so stirred and encouraged her fellow working-women; here were wrought into shape exquisite sketches, stories, bits of rhyme, quaint silhouettes of life, wonderful descriptions of places and of people. From this "old brown house" she set forth upon her vagabond journeyings about the great world, carrying her readers with her, as Solomon, traveling from kingdom to kingdom through the air,

carried his vast household upon his bit of a magic carpet. And hither she always returned, drawn by the invisible chords of home-love, as by the magnet of Solomon himself.

This life-work of Martha Field (Catharine Cole) counted by years, has been comparatively brief. She was born in the picturesque old town of Lexington, Missouri. Her parents removed, in the early part of the sixties, to New Orleans. From her father, W. M. Smallwood, himself a talented journalist, she received her training for the profession which she adopted while still in the school-room. Her first newspaper work was done for the *New Orleans Republican*. The growing ambition of the young girl led her, later, to California, where she secured a position on one of the San Francisco journals. Here she was married, and here, within a short time, she was left a widow with an infant daughter. She quitted at once the great city of the west, whose vivid warmth and color clung ever after to her pen, and returned to New Orleans to accept a position on the editorial staff of the *Times*. In 1881 she began that work for the *New Orleans Picayune*, which laid the real foundation for her constantly growing reputation, both as a journalist and as a literary worker of a high order. In an article written for the "Round Table of Lou-

isiana Authors," Mr. Bernard Shields says of her: "In literary work Catharine Cole is something of a dilletante; and whether the subject be of home, of art, of social life, of travel, or of politics, her pen is equally facile. Searching only for the truth, lauding what is good and denouncing wrong without fear or favor, her judgment is considered trustworthy and reliable. Perhaps one of the best things that can be said of her writings is that by them and in them she has always upheld women. Her pen is always busy in their behalf. . . . The remarkable progress of the cause of womanhood in the past ten years has astonished the world and made it better. Its advancement, particularly in Louisiana, is due in no small degree to the work of Catharine Cole. . . . She has never lost an opportunity to wield her pen in behalf of her state; and no southern writer has done more to make known its resources and to advance the interests of its people. . . . To the influence of her pen and brain New Orleans owes its Training School for Nurses, its Woman's Exchange, and its Kindergartens. She is said to know as much about the material resources of Louisiana as any one in the state. On foot, in a buggy, or by canoe, she has traveled over every inch of its territorial limits, sending back

to the journal she represents the most truthful and realistic reports of her travels. . . . She knows Europe by heart. . . . Her extensive travels, both abroad and in this country, have added largely to her rich fund of information, and her ramblings into the remotest corners of the world, . . . have given her a knowledge of men and things that strengthens her writings with assurance and masculine boldness; while her sensitive tenderness and sympathy with human suffering lend the charm of woman's pen that appeals to the heart."

The same writer describes Mrs. Field personally as a "rather slightly built woman with light brown hair, grayish blue eyes, topping a large nose and mouth, a soft, pleasant voice, and an unassuming quiet demeanor."

In 1894 Catharine Cole became a member of the editorial staff of the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*. Her letters to that journal—from Switzerland, from England, from aboard ship in tropical seas—have sustained her brilliant reputation.

But a singular pathos now attaches to the sketches written from the "brown shell of a house" at the Other End of the Street. For the hand that has "knitted into the russet-colored

fabric" of so many lives, the "golden threads of love and hope" has become well-nigh helpless. The spirit which has so faithfully wrought for the good of others is strong and ardent still; the brain is clear and keen, but the flesh, in the grasp of pain, is weak, and the heart flutters wearily in a panting breast.

Several years have passed since Catharine Cole was first stricken by a malady which has gradually sapped her abundant strength. Bravely, calmly, quietly, she has continued to write; those who know her know also that not until the pen drops forever from her nerveless fingers will she cease to speak her message of hope and cheer to the world.

This volume is made up from her work ; and it is sent forth confidently to the many who have known her face to face; and to the many more who have never seen her, but who have been strengthened and helped by her wide-reaching influence.

M. E. M. DAVIS.

FOREWORD.

NEW ORLEANS, March 25, 1897.

The friends of Mrs. Martha R. Field, who have in hand the collection and publishing of her essays in permanent form, have done me the honor to think that my warm appreciation of Mrs. Field's work, expressed in the form of an introduction, will add value to the book.

I do not think such work needs any introduction. It speaks for itself, and its strength and beauty cannot be enhanced by praise.

The one enthusiastic appreciator of the invalid writer, who was the inceptor of the idea of collecting and putting in book form some of the scattered writings of "Catharine Cole," is a brilliant writer of the North who flies to the Mexican gulf coast in Winter to escape the rigors and changes of the northern climate.

When Mrs. Wakeman — for it is Mrs. Antoinette Van Hoesen Wakeman of Chicago who planned the issue of this work — asked me to write an introduction, or, rather a "foreword" (for Mrs. Mollie E. Moore Davis

has written a beautiful introduction), I requested her to furnish me with some personal data of Mrs. Field, that I might be possessed of that which would help me to more completely do justice to the subject.

In response, there came from Mrs. Wakeman what she calls a "working draft" of an introduction, but which seems to me to be so much better than anything I can write myself, that I shall insist on using it and at the same time on stating, as above, the part Mrs. Wakeman has taken in the work of appreciation — a statement that would not appear in connection with it except by some such means as I am taking to secure it. The following is Mrs. Wakeman's "Working Draft":

"The essays of Mrs. Martha R. Field, 'Catharine Cole,' which are found in this book, have already appeared in the daily press, and are remarkable for the noble and direct simplicity which informs and pervades them. They have in a peculiar way not only stirred, recreated and uplifted the uncritical, but have satisfied and inspired the more fastidious, and given their author a permanent and undisputed place in the hearts of a great army of readers who have never seen her face.

"Mrs. Field began her work as a young

woman, and exceptional indeed is the perennial power she possesses of production, which has enabled her for many years to supply the never satisfied daily press with such literary work as these essays represent. Modest, self-unconscious, wholly loyal to the duty close at hand, until it was urged upon her by friends, it never occurred to this writer who pictures Nature in her varying moods with a delicacy and vividness rarely equaled, and treats in so many of its varied aspects the supreme art of living, that her work had the merit which entitled it to be put in permanent form.

"This fine quality of standing unthoughtful of self and giving forth, through unceasing and strenuous effort, that which opened so much in many directions to others is manifest, not obviously, but none the less potently, in her work.

"This high-minded impersonality, together with the power Mrs. Field has in a marked degree of helping men and women to understand themselves and the world around them, stirs her readers not only intellectually, but ethically, and incites the unfolding from within which broadens and deepens life.

"In recommending 'Catharine Cole's Book,' I will say that it not only furnishes food for thought, but a stimulus to the hope that leads

up and on. As the writer has distilled from an unusually wide and varied experience, including much sorrow, that which she has given out in these essays, there are few who will not find in them answer to their needs. From title page to final sentence there are no cold formulas. Having been moved and stirred herself, her every sentence evidences her right to be heard. When these essays become known to the book-reading public, they will take their place on their merit and need no recommendation of mine to commend them."

In addition to what Mrs. Wakeman has written I will add just a word. These pages are filled with poetry and truth, wisdom and philosophy. The writer takes a broad and generous view of human nature, which seems to have been gathered through experience of one whose observation is keen but kindly. There is no striving for effect, no desire to distort fact in order to make a literary point, and no one will read this book but will feel the better and higher for having done so.

JOSEPH JEFFERSON.

OVER THE HILLTOPS.

OVER THE HILLTOPS.

It is an epoch in life wherein we discover, as by an inspiration, the beauty or the grandeur or the goodness of any work or any thing. These flashlight revelations tearing across the sky of our night are our divine moments — our winged moments. They come to us in successive stages and leave us finer, larger, wiser, better. They are the milestones along our real life — the indicators, pointing heartward, of our real growth. To have at any time this sudden sense of knowledge, to be Columbus to something of God's or man's creating, is everything. A door once opened, giving us a look into another room hitherto locked against us, giving us a look into a garden where undreamed-of roses bloom, can never be truly closed for us again. We have seen into the beyond, and we know. We can never unknow a thing.

A little child sits in the sun playing, the winds blow sweet about her, and their Juney breath caresses her fair aureoled head. Her vibrant little voice thrills and buzzes somnolently like the pleasant whirr of a humming bird's wings. Suddenly there floats in at the open window, riding a sunbeam down as if it were a

summer wave, a little silken, silvery-masted craft put afloat by some tethered plant. It is a thistle-down swinging on the wind, silver-sheathed, stealthy, with a touch too fine to be tangible on the ruder fabric of our flesh. As it floats airily through space it falls across the wonder of the child's eyes. She gazes at it, with a mysterious rush of recognition and intuition fluttering her leashed and leaping soul. To her this is no common thistle-down, but a fairy, a very Princess Fairy, dumb, roaming, and beautiful. Its coming was the needed but natural confirmation of the faith that is orthodox in Lilliput. Now all her beautiful angels of belief become real. All Wonderland is her empire, and sitting in the radiance of the day and of her joy, she reigns a queen with the shaft of a sunbeam for her scepter.

And thus her growth begins. A door has been opened and she has seen the blooming roses in the garden beyond; a hillock has been mounted and she has glimpsed the wondrous peaks of the far-off hills. It will still be growth for her when she realizes the beautiful fact that the floating thistle-down, new to her, is the old age of a lovely plant, and again she will feel the uplift that comes of acquirement, the joy of conquest, the sweetness of comprehending things and of being in sympathy with something that is beautiful.

There are some of us, learning to spell out the language of nature, who may remember the absolute joy that possessed us when first we sensed the majesty and the growing of trees, the patient

unfurling of the young leaf banners, the putting forth of new twigs, the renewal of life, the mighty effort to attain symmetry and the far-off beckoning skies, the fine adjustment within the environment of earth and sky. No one forgets the first conception of an idea. Then is a mighty moment that contains for us the annunciation of some great fact in nature or in life.

I remember once standing on the sloping sward of a beautiful estate in Ireland and looking at the ripple of a pebbled river and the eternal calm of the blue sky through a network of delicately traced marble columns that knit overhead in the multitudinous beauty of arches of solid masonry. It was the ruined, crumbling remembrance of an old Franciscan abbey. A tangle of purple-fruited brambles filled the shady spaces of the cool cloisters; an Irish ivy twisted itself in the slender columns; the deep, brittle blue luminosity of a June sky bending over the fairest country in the world was picked out by the flawless perfection of those beautiful arches. It came on me with the lightning flash that an arch of masonry is the most perfect work of man's hand. It is cathedral and Pantheon, capital and Coliseum. You may look at things half a lifetime and not see them at all; but on the day you realize their beauty, their fitness and proportion, their use, then they become yours. Gape and gawk through a cathedral, wondering at its height and space, when you feel the spirit of its architecture, then it is your sanctuary. When you realize the

growing trees, then the forest is your temple, with the sky for its dome. Then indeed, Westminster may become an epic, and that old Franciscan abbey a religion.

Some heathens have had the belief that the sky was the face of a god. This is beautiful enough even for us of to-day, who are still heathens to many of the beauties of God's worlds. You may have gone on for years walking down the May mornings, glad, alert, with the spring-time of health and strength leaping in your heels and heart, and tugging at your muscles, but still giving no real thought to anything of nature about you, until, as in a flash, your soul, like a dove, seemed to put forth white wings and cleave the blue. How was it you had missed being conscious of it for so long — coming and going and never until now comprehending with this new, sudden, subtle sympathy the eternal calm and tenderness of the sky? It bends over like the Madonna. You might pray to it; your loosed soul might swim in it. Its beauty elates you and fills your senses, and you feel to have gained something. The world is suddenly grown fairer — you own more of it. Are you tired? Here is something to rest you. Is earth dull? Look up. Would your eyes grovel on something at your feet? Look up. It is the countenance of God in the infinite glory of the sky that meets your gaze and answers your plaint with a benediction.

A stage of growth is when we discover some

God-like beauty, some tender human sweetness in the heart of a friend. The negro washer-woman toiling at her tubs may give you this thrill of discovery. You find she has something great in her — something that you may lack — a patient endurance of poverty, say; a fine persistence to wash her clothes white as snow. She is a hero at her trade, and when you discover or realize the hero-heart of her it ought to make you better at your trade. Every time you find or sense some beauty in life, you burst a bond that holds you to earth. You are that much freer to be fine. You rule. When you find something beautiful in your own trade, you are growing. Your trade may be scrubbing, or driving a cart, or studying a school-girl's books, or mending a gown; but when you take joy in working your best — in seeing some other made happy because you are doing your best — then you may hold up your head and walk the earth like a goddess.

A girl at home goes on thoughtlessly accepting the services of her mother. She sees the mother mending, and tending the home fires, sees her always willing and never wearied, always sinking self, and it seems all right and natural. There is no hint of the missed joys from her patient life, no plaint of the dull evenings at home, no whispered regret for the music and the books, the flowers and the companionship that are denied her. But some day, often too late, there comes to the daughter the divine moment of

cognizance. The pathetic patience, the mute endurance, the infinite tenderness, the dumb self-abnegation, the long self-sacrifice, the immolated saint of motherhood, take shape like a figure on the bleak height of Calvary. First Christ, and then a mother! The moment and the passion of a revelation like this hurts, but it leaves you kinder, tenderer, sweeter.

It makes no difference where you are placed in life, you are intended to look up and to grow, to widen and radiate. The warrior in you must fight; the hero in you must protect and save. May be there is just a carpenter in you, or a seamstress, or a patient knitter by a home fire, but the beauty is there all the same. You must grow to the sun, to the stars, to the far-off skies. To do and to be, you have no need to concern yourself about others, to take part in your neighbor's squabblings. Think of yourself. The individual "you" is of the first account, and that must be so fine and so strong, so distinct, and in such sharp outline that you will be a cameo cut in the beautiful amber of life. The true man or woman cannot be gnat-bitten by any one's example or the fear of any one's comment or sneer. It is a puny soul that totters and is afraid to stand alone and send out its own cry. You bare yourself not to the world but to God. You must show him your heart, not its husk. How much truth is there in you? What do you feel when you read Shakespeare? When you meet a hero? When you see anguish or sorrow or pain hurrying to

some neighbor of yours? When the poem touches your heart it touches the poet in you; when the actor makes you spring in the air and cry hurrah, it is because he has touched that genius in you.

A country boy going to school came crying to me one day that all his books were old to him. "When I read them, I find I know them," he said. It was the meeting of emperors. He was royal to all great truths. Until we meet them so, they are not truths for us. I am dumb for you unless you know you might have said this that I say. I am dead for you unless you might feel the thrill of my sorrow or my passion.

In a remote country village, who has not been touched by the spectacle of life? You come there from the big city that is an artery of the world, and you find out in the village what little things go to make up life. The people are like invalids who pass life sitting by a window and are constrained to amuse themselves with little things. Which woman rode in which buggy; how this one has made over her perennial gown; who shook hands with the visitor and who did not; the making of preserves; the weights of new babies. But this is not the place to sneer; nay, this is the place to learn how large is the world, what room there is to grow, what need there is to set your hopes and aims on the higher things.

Sometimes in the big city you meet a woman who is bound up in herself. It is not a compact between herself and God. She owns no Jacob's ladder traversed by the beautiful angels of good

deeds, but she lives, works, thinks only for her own body, her own vanity, her own comfort. All the world is incidental to her affairs, to the satisfaction of her vanity. When she goes to bed at night she has not done one single act for the happiness of another. She has no plans to sweeten life for others. She would not pass the fare of an old man in the street car, nor think of denying herself a plume on her bonnet to succor a starving family. What does she live for — pinioned to pride and self-conceit, tethered to the earth, meeting no royal ones, stirred by no fine sentiments? I would not have you change places with such a one if she dwelt in a castle of Castile. Never be ashamed of shedding a tear; never be ashamed of jumping out of yourself into the armor of a knight; never be ashamed to be seen lifting a beggar over the street; never despair of meeting an emperor.

Some people are good by rule because they cannot get along in decent society otherwise. Some go to church simply because it is Sunday. You can't keep that up. You find yourself out, and you know that God has found you out. But you must go to church or to the temple of the woods to find out if the germ of religion is in you. Do you thrill at the singing, at the dome, at the solemn cry of the litany; does some peace come into you and make tranquil your hour? Then it is in you to grow. You may not grow dogmas, but you will grow starward and skyward.

Sum up your day. What did you do in it;

does it leave ashes in your teeth, or the fragrance of violets? You can not afford to waste life on its curl papers, to dawdle along talking of puddings and preserves. What is the book I read to me unless it teaches me something — how to feel, how to smile, how to weep? I must be sure a thing holds nothing good for me and then I must cast it aside. I cannot waste time on nothings. I must live, must be amused, must see the world, must be made better. I cannot waste life, love, energy, ambition, on the trivial soul, the barren soil, the soulless form. Life is precious when it makes us laugh, weep, moan, act, cry, hurrah; not when it permits us to dream in a sort of senseless calm. Let me sail, let me be seasick, let me be wrecked, let me have this turmoil of living; how can the rest and security of the Rock of Ages be sweet to me, how shall I clasp it, unless I have come out of the tempest?

You must not be afraid of anything save the useless. A useless woman, making no one the finer for her being, giving no one a zest for companionship of her, sweetening the soul of no one, is like a thing made of ashes. When the true one comes along she will crumble as an old dead body might, feeling for the first time in a thousand years the live air. I have often seen a woman crumble under this stress. In the council, in the association, in the home gathering, what she is and why she is there is plain to all eyes.

Sometimes a woman will have nothing to do with a good work unless she can be president of

it. If it makes any difference to you where you sit, be careful; you are turning to ashes, and the draft from the outer world will blow you away. Do n't think about yourself, think about the sky; let all the sweet sap and juices of your deep humanity leap upward to it. When I come into the council of women who are talking and working for the good of others, does it make any difference whether my voice is heard? I can keep still and, if I am the finest nature there, I can still dominate that meeting. Do I care who speaks; who is leader? To follow is just as fine; to keep silent is just as grand. Why do you go to your club? Is it to laud yourself; is it to gorge yourself on the fat of leadership; is it to advertise yourself as good as your neighbor? Then you are no worthy member. The pettiness of you makes you an outlaw. Cleaner, finer souls ought to blackball you. Search yourself and find out why you do a thing, not why your neighbor does it.

But if you go there for growth, if you forget yourself in the work, then, though you sit on a footstool in the dingiest corner, you are a queen, and the scepter of your influence is all magical and fine.

Some women never get tired of talking about themselves; they never get enough praise. This is dangerous and dwarfing. To your child, to your mother, to your husband, you may talk "I." To your God you may talk nothing else. But this is all. To grow finely is to forget self.

In the heat and passion of battle the soldier forgets that the enemy's bullet may pierce his heart. He becomes a hero because the bonds that hold him to earth are snapped asunder. He becomes great because he forgets everything in the passion of winning. His arm is the instrument. It is only when you are carried out of yourself that you really advance in a path that you cannot retrace. To make some one else content with life, to make the way easier for some one else, to cause a child to smile, to rest an old woman of her burden, to right a wrong, to tell a fine truth, to give a flower, to ease an ailing one, these are the ways of growth. This is the way to make life beautiful. It is not necessary to jump a continent or cross an ocean. Often you need not span a gutter. Life and being and doing begin at home. You can't grow from the outward in. You expand like the breath of incense in a cathedral, like the perfume of a flower in a garden. You must unfold petal by petal until your sweetness permeates all space.

And now let us hurry onward. Surely over this hill-top we shall see the tent of home. Let us climb on, patient hearts. Over this nearer hilltop we see only another higher still, and beyond that another higher still, white with eternal snows. But going on, we train our lungs to breathe a thinner air, and upon us shines the reflected whiteness of the snows. Some day, all at once, like a sunrise in the Alps, the beauty of this climbing seizes on us. We are glad to be

mountaineers and to shout at each other from the hilltops. And then it is no longer strife. The soul grows like an Easter lily. The heartache is over. The skies only — the far-off skies — are above you. You lift your soul, and on this mountain height of fine endeavor, with roughened hands and wearied heart, you still may cry, "I have won!"

QUEEN ANNE FRONTS AND MARY ANN BACKS.

QUEEN ANNE FRONTS AND MARY ANN BACKS.

Once upon a time it was my fortune to live across the way from a house that had a Queen Anne front built onto its plain Mary Ann back. At that time I was not very familiar with legitimate Queen Anne architecture, and I believed the new front on my neighbor's house to be pure Queen Anne — because they told me so, and they had been so informed by their architect. I am the more inclined to believe that that front was Queen Anne, because, nowadays, any style, whether imitated in bedsteads, sideboards, or houses, that cannot be otherwise accounted for, is known by the merest tyro — to say nothing of toadies — to be Queen Anne.

For years and years my neighbors had lived, wholesomely, happily, and comfortably, in one of those big, bleak, angular, and inartistic residences, with a gallery up stairs and down, a hall *ditto*, and a wing in which were located the servants' rooms and cooking apartments. There was not a room that was not made sacred from its sweet associations with the births, deaths, and marriages that are the peaceful progress and fate of every family. All the rooms had their gentle ghosts,

or held, like perfume in an incense bowl, the fragrant memories of laughter and of tears. But the girls grew up into young ladyhood, the lads were in demand for germans and opera parties, the sturdy father prospered in his business, and the upshot of it all was that the old house was moved back and æsthetic carpenters soldered on to it a gorgeous, gabled, shingled anomaly, that, for the purposes of identification, was referred to as Queen Anne. The new front was mighty fine. It held a library, a suite of drawing-rooms, a reception-room, a music-room, a dining-room, and a few accessories in the way of cloak-rooms and lavatories—so much, in fact, that it has always been a wonder to me why the architect did not also transmogrify and fresco the old original homestead, instead of tacking it on as a constant, plain, weather-boarded reminder of days that are no more.

Nothing in New Orleans was finer than that Queen Anne front, and often in the cool of the evening we used to promenade down the street just to admire its artistic façade, and study, in our ignorance, its intricate curiosities of architecture. But as we walked home again we were invariably brought cheek by jowl, as it were, with the plain, old, dear and familiar two-story rear building, and somehow, as the result of a joke, we fell into the way of calling it the house with the Queen Anne front and the Mary Ann back.

But it took me a long while to get used to the incongruity. I did not find it easy to adjust the

Queen Anne with the Mary Ann. As I passed from the gabled, æsthetic front to the plain, rain-beaten, weather-worn rear building now joined on to Queen Anne by a sort of mediæval link, I could not but be reminded of a corpse dressed only in front, and who, on resurrection day, will be obliged to persistently back against the pearly walls of the new Jerusalem in order to hide the deficiencies of costume for which, poor thing, it is not at all responsible.

Or else, when I took the street-car and observed that gorgeous Queen Anne front bulging so importantly on the grand thoroughfare; when I heard people exclaiming over it and admiring it,—I could not help for the life of me a sensation of discomfort akin to that experienced by the gentleman who complained that he could not live unless the toes of his recently amputated foot were properly straightened out. At last the dismembered limb was unearthed; it was found out the toe really needed straightening; the member was reburied, and the ex-owner had no more trouble. And just so it seemed to me. I never could rest easy in the enjoyment of my neighbor's grandeur until that Mary Ann back was renovated to a proper accordance with the Queen Anne front.

I think I wasted a great deal of time over this architectural incongruity before it occurred to me that a more serious fault, and far more irremediable, is to be found in people who are permanently afflicted with a sort of mental and moral

disproportion that can be explained by saying they are closely alike to my neighbor's house with the Queen Anne front and the Mary Ann back.

Who has not been amused to see a swell carriage at the front door of a swell residence, while an untidy, broken swill barrel, a disgrace to any neighborhood, stood at the back?

Who has not seen the mistress in a lace tea gown lolling on the porch of the Queen Anne front, while the slatternly, uncared-for poor relation worked in the ashes under the porch of the Mary Ann back?

Who has not seen the high art young ladies in tennis gowns playing on the lawn before the Queen Anne front, while their ragged lingerie flopped on the clothesline behind the dreary portals of the Mary Ann back.

Often we have known the hired, society hothouse flowers of the florist to come in at the Queen Anne front door, while the unpaid maker of ball-dresses, or the hungry beggar for a slice of bread, went unrewarded from the gate in the shadow of the Mary Ann rear.

Who has not heard of the chicken salad and champagne p[illegible]ception in the Queen Anne drawing-roor[illegible] who hears of the conjugal quarrel in t[illegible] Ann bedroom, or of the corn beef an[illegible] grits repasts that follow the reception in the Mary Ann breakfast-room?

I have heard of a Queen Anne front and a Mary Ann b[illegible]ort of a lady whose only tea

gown is reserved for reception days, who only uses her nice table linen when company comes, who even covers up her toilet ornaments on all save her reception days.

But I have also heard of the Queen Anne front Christian who does all his praying in church; the Queen Anne front philanthropist who only gives when the gift is certain to be published; of the Queen Anne clergyman who only has time to be socially intimate with rich parishioners; and of the Queen Anne socialist who publishes a fine equality and practices a close exclusiveness, and who snobbishly will have nothing to do with people who are not rich and fashionable.

Now and again there is put forth by some sharp publisher a book of the biographies of persons of the Queen Anne front and Mary Ann back turn of mind. Each individual writes his own sketch, anonymously of course, or if he does not he gets some friend or relative to do the slavering for him. The result is a series of remarkable superlatives of adulation. Not long since a lady who writes exhibited to me a gushing biographical sketch of herself, cut from a magazine and pasted in her scrapbook, but which, unfortunately, I knew she had written herself.

Who has not heard of that jovial, beneficent employer, who talks of his employees as his "people"; who loves them so dearly in public, but has it in for them for every small fault they commit, and is certain, in the end, in a sly, subtle way, to get even with them; who sets a spy

over them and never forgives them if surprised into any manifestation of individuality or any expression of independence?

I have known a preacher to talk beautifully of the great loving heart that should make a man Christ-like, and I have known the same preacher to shut the door on a foolish, friendless girl gone wrong. I have known a philanthropist to spend six weeks getting other people to give money to a charity concern, yet send a little child asking bread empty-handed from his gate. I have seen a missionary to the South Sea islanders draw her petticoats away from the clean, guinea-blue gown of an old mammy, hobbling into one of our street cars. I have seen a rich toady, whose carriage was at the daily disposal of her rich minister's wife, refuse five cents to an old woman who wanted it to go to the poorhouse.

Onto the plain, modest, every-day-looking Mary Ann structures of daily life, how many people are there who build Queen Anne fronts of stucco and Swiss shingles, in which to house sham fashion, sham elegance, sham tastes, sham philanthropies, sham virtues, and sham enterprises?

Of these, the foremost are the people who scrimp, save, and contrive to get away for the summer, not into the woods, nor on the sands where the salt waters are, but away, anywhere, to some fashionable hotel, full of the two types of society, the truly fashionable and rich, and the people who wish to be thought truly fashionable and rich. The old, grinding life at home,

lived patiently for the sake of this annual outing, is forgotten—they are now in occupancy of the Queen Anne front. All is dark, and lights are out in that Mary Ann back where the ball dresses were dyed, the bonnets made over, the servants stood off, and the bills disputed.

Mrs. Tomshoddy, who goes away for the summer, refers to her maid, her housegirl, her dining-room servant, and her cook, but forgets to explain that all these are comprised in the one sad little slattern who sleeps in a closet and really does the work of five.

Mrs. Hiflyer intimately discusses her friends, the Flats, who share expenses with her at home, and no one guesses it is her way of saying she takes boarders.

Now the only harm in the Queen Anne front and the Mary Ann back is that people will laugh at the apparent incongruity, and that the owner of this combination is likely to grow ashamed of the plainer side. My friends, whose house was the inspiration of this, never, I am happy to say, became disloyal to the old roof. The mother in the family used to say: "The old house — big, plain and easy-going—is what we were; the new part — fine, frescoed, and all style and artificial manners—is what we are."

In fact I have known whole cities to live with a view to keeping the best foot forward. The front streets were cleaned—visitors were allowed to see only the show places. A great bluster was made of enterprise, hospitality, and energy.

But when visitors came they had to pay double price; immigrants were systematically crowded out; old grudges were visited on innocent victims; at the first hint of a hotel, a railroad, a factory, property was run up to absurdly fictitious values—in fact, the cozy, comfortable appearing Queen Anne front was all for show, and an ugly human conflict still festered in the angular halls of the old half-ruined Mary Ann back, in which the town's morals and the town's real character were contained.

In modern American life everything tends to the façade. It is raised high over the roof—a pretense of factory carving and carpenter's gluing that a good strong wind can easily blow down. Under its shadow may be sickliness, poverty, grimy, dingy rooms. The white marble carriage step does not always announce a clean kitchen. The clean-swept sward on the front street does not always mean that the alley-way is clear of broken bottles, or that the neighbors on the side streets have no cause to complain of everyday untidiness. A *Directoire* gown has been known to be draped over a ragged or a soiled petticoat. Let us, for truth's sake, be true to ourselves, and when we build Queen Anne fronts remove that suspicion of imitation fineness that is inevitably suggested by the Mary Ann back.

A LITTLE GOOD-BY TO ARCADY.

A LITTLE GOOD-BY TO ARCADY.

For many years I have been thinking to write an article on Arcady. I lived there; and it seemed to me that no one could know so well its tangled paths, its leaf strewn, rutty roads that led nowhere in particular, its quiet skies and all its dear localities.

Every morning as I stepped out of the dingy brown shell of a house that was home to me, and that sheltered my young one as the nest does the fledgeling, I would look out on the world, up deep into the sky, and along the green cathedral aisles of the untrimmed trees and say: "I will write about Arcady now, for surely it was never so sweet."

We lived on a road—for in Arcady there is nothing so paved and metropolitan as a street—that meandered along between mossy ferns, and finally dwindled off peaceably and mistily under brambles to the cemeteries. There were happy years for those of us who dwelt in the old brown house when the way to the cemetery was merely legendary; and when on All Saints' Day the neighbors used to go by with their roses and wreaths, I could hardly understand, as they were swallowed up in the green beyond, that they had

gone like black ghosts of dead loves to a graveyard. But there came a day — some tranquil years ago — when we too with lagging footsteps learned whither the old road ran, and after that somehow the roses in the thorny hedges that grew in hillocks along the way seemed sweeter and whiter and more pure.

And there was a way — a street-car way — devious and jog-trotting and easy-going, by which we Arcadians kept up communication with the city. I wonder was there ever such a street car route as that! It was like a volume of statistics bound in vellum and illuminated with marginal notes of bloom and beauty. There were no names to the streets save those handed down from one generation of car-drivers to the other, as the minstrelsy and folk-lore of early ages was preserved by word of mouth, but, instead, the very telegraph poles and electric-light spears of deadly poison were covered with rose vines and wild morning glory, transforming them into guide-posts, with a million tremulous tendrils pointing the way to Arcady.

It was always a fond belief of mine in those rose-leaf days that I could sniff my way home just by the odors and perfumes that marked the way. I know there was a place right at the great stone heart of the city where the Arcadians took the homeward-bound street-car, that smelled only of gas and steam and a town's uncanny dust, of scavengers' carts and apothecaries' shops. A little beyond was a corner that might have been called

the corner of Absinthe and Anisette, so obtrusive were the bar-room odors of stale liquors and wilted lemons. Just a little farther on, as our vehicle gave a sudden lurch away from the town, there would come across the night whiffs of air from off the New Basin, a musty, almshouse sort of air, combined of old sawdust and teak-wood, of rotting masts, of oakum and rosin, and of tarry ropes lying in tangles on the decks of charcoal schooners.

And then it was easy to tell when we came to the foot-hill residences that precede the Alps of Swelldom, for here the faint, faithful perfume of violets, that grew in parched beds with barriers of stone beer bottles, greeted the nostril. In Summer times, no matter how dark the night, the breath of violets always told me, as a sort of floral time table might, where we were on the road to Arcady.

Magnolias grew in the great gardens and on the stately lawns of Upper Tendom, and then life had an interlude, a breathing spell, where the road crossed a grassy common or wild country space, where the townsfolk came in the July days to make hay while the sun shone. This place, the city's park, was really the vestibule to Arcady, and at its outer edge grew the thorny bushes, the swinging vines, the pretty trees, set thick with the spice-scented roses of our Arcady.

What simple-hearted folk dwelt there I need not say. It takes simple-hearted folk to live thus close-pressed to the heart of Nature. It seemed

every one knew every one else, and when we met we most surely stopped to pass the time of day. And no one gossiped, and no one was unkind, and no jealousies were so bitter they could not be sweetened by a loaf of home-made cake, nor rancors so deep they could not be drowned in home-made wine.

We were famous housekeepers in Arcady, and there were no cakes like those we sent on silver salvers to each other's feasts — white cakes and gold cakes, snowed under an inch of icing and decorated like old-fashioned brides, with posies of myrtle and sprigs of lemon verbena tied up with rose geraniums.

I shall always think that nowhere in the world were such entertainments as we were wont to give in that little world of ours. There was a hall — our own hall — in which we congregated for fairs, where we bought each other's pincushions and made complimentary guesses at each other's cakes; for concerts, where we admired each other's singing; for theatricals, where we put on wigs and laughed at each other's acting; and in that hall the biggest big wig-decorator in Christendom might have taken notes in making things beautiful. Who could twist a honeysuckle vine with the art of Mrs. B.? Who could put up a posy as prettily as the Widow C.? What roses were so rich and red as those Mrs. R. brought down, with the dew of the country still wet on their lips? Where could you find such gumbo as pretty laughing Mrs. T. ladled out to us with

lavish hand? What Charlotte could have been so admirable cutting bread and butter as gentle Mrs. B.? Whose punch was ever so delicious as that concocted by Mrs. N.? and what smiles could have sweetened it as did the smiles of the Widows D. and P.? Oh, it was all kindness and loveliness in Arcady, where, when we went to each other's parties, we were always given some of the goodies to carry home!

Sometimes great folk came to our homes— poets and singers and scholars. Once a famous singer, whose heart still has some roots in our world, came to visit one of us. She is a very grand and famous singer, and she lives in London and sings sometimes for great princes. It was very pretty in Arcady that night, and the home in which we were entertained was gay with flowers. The plump Arcadian matrons and the gentle Arcadian widows sat about, smiling and cheery, with April roses on their breasts and at their belts. Every one was happy and joyous in a simple fashion, and there was no showing off nor pranking, as there often is — out of Arcady.

When the feasting was over we sang songs — not arias from operas and recitatives from oratorios, but songs that go to the heart, and tell their own story unaided. I remember we sang the "Suwanee River," and "Old Black Joe," and "Home, Sweet Home," and "Auld Lang Syne"; and I remember how that glorious, costly contralto voice which princes have listened to and applauded, joined in with our trebles and altos

and falsettos, just as beautifully as a golden thread may be woven into the russet-colored, serviceable garb of daily life.

And then, by and by we tied our white nubias over our heads, and with our handkerchiefs full of goodies dangling on our arms, we said good-night, and went away.

I wonder if nights can be anywhere so sweet as they are in that little suburban locality I love to think on as Arcady? There it was lovely to walk home from some neighbor's at midnight, when "the stars were in the quiet skies," and the faint breath of the wild briar rose hung on the air, when cowbells tankled dreamfully down the uncertain roads, and the sky floated overhead, as if the Mother of God were watching there in her wondrous star-shot robe of celestial hue. . . .

But somehow the days and months and years fell off as faded petals fall from a rose that will bloom no more, and I was never able to get any word of that article on Arcady chained down into black and white.

I know now that one may not write of life until one has done with it. A picture to be beautiful must have perspective—and memory is the heart's perspective, just as hope is its glad and golden foreground.

And now all that is over and ended. That green leaf is turned down forever, and Arcady is ours now, just as our dead are ours—just as the things we may remember no power can take away

from us. A few evil days ago we moved like country mice down into the city—"the stony-hearted stepmother," De Quincey called it—and I want some gardener, some town florist to tell me how country plants may be made to insert their roots under cobble stones and how to keep wild vines growing on slate roofs.

The other night the little She-who-must-be-obeyed of our family came home from school with instructions to observe Venus and Mars and Jupiter. So, when the stalled ox was eaten, she and I went forth into the streets. Everywhere was the smell of stale beer, of wilted lemon peel, the rumble of carts, the scream of steam, the tinkle of street-car bells. We passed an open window, and in the room beyond a woman had her feet upon the treadmill of her machine. A slobbering candle lighted her work, a coarse piece of jeans—even work was unlovely in that dingy room. A drunken man lolled by; a town bird, dusty and ragged, had gone to sleep in one of the town trees—a telegraph pole. I am sure now that the commonplace sorrows of the world belong to the great cities. It was in London Elizabeth Barrett listened with an aching heart to the children crying in the street.

We did not find the stars—there was not enough sky; and as we walked back to our—our rooms I told Flo of a little London child I once knew who was taken on Mayday from Shoreditch out into Arcady. And when he saw that great, eternal, luminous Blue bending down above his

head he cried, and was afraid that it would fall on him. And then to myself I kept Emerson's thought about the stars, where he says: "Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are! If the stars only appeared one night in a thousand years how would men believe and adore and preserve for generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown." To how many wanderers in a great city's stone forest are the infrequent stars smiling down between the narrow walls, like mute remembrancers of some lost summer, some Arcady from which there had been an eviction.

And yet, it is the instinct of the human side of us and the intellectual side of us to go to town. Electric lights, the great flickering gaslights of the great city, tempt us as stars may never do. What beautiful pictures in our minds we bring to town with us! Who will ever forget with what infinite love and longing the gentle Autocrat for both town and country breakfast tables has written of the life that must have been his own before he came up to Boston? "Home, Sweet Home" was a lowly thatched cottage, far from palaces. I think even the gentle hearted Will must have dwelt off Fleet street when he wrote of the daisies pied and the cuckoo buds of yellow hue that do "paint the meadows with delight." With what a longing heart Hood must have hung out of his dreary room overlooking the town Thames, that reflected more oil lamps than stars, before he wrote—

I remember, I remember
The roses red and white.

George Eliot came from her sweet English shire to live her great life and write her great books in London town. Songs of love and hope and home fly Arcady-ward as smoke from factory chimneys floats up into the clean, illimitable depths of the sky.

When one loses Arcady there is no getting back to it. Arcady is there just the same, but the heart for it, the ability to love it, to be simple enough for it, passes and will no more return than bloom to the tarnished grape, youth to the unkindling eye, innocence to the stained life. The young lad living in a town attic longs with a sickening heart for the far, fair hills of home, for the dewy fields and the window in the roof "where the sun peeped in at morn." In some prosperous days he goes back to the old sylvan life—his body goes back and his eyes look on, but the life is not for him any more. It only kept for him its inspiration and its charm when he was far from it and not of it.

There came a time when the portly Mr. Shakespeare went back to the banks of the brown, shallow Avon. Not to take up life again in the stone-floored gabled house in Henly street — not to go a-poaching in forbidden forests — no more to cross the primrose paths to Shottery — but to live in a grand house called "New Place" and to be in, but not of, Arcady.

Perhaps this is a personal plaint and of no par-

ticular interest to you, good sir or madam? Perhaps it is written only for those faithful, old, first friends I left behind me when the leafy curtain of wild rose vines dropped on the Arcadian act of our life, but after all have you lost no Arcady from all your busy life? If not, I am sorry for you. Even passed sorrows leave only a sandalwood perfume, and past joys leave with us something that is better than sandalwood or lavender.

But no more will the sweet winds blow and the roses grow for me in the land where all the woods are merry. No more on Sunday mornings shall I hear a soft fist pummelling on the garden gate (the bell on the old brown house being always broken), while some generous neighbor sends me a good-morning written in roses.

From my lofty window in the town I look down through the rain and the mist on a marble-yard, where an old stonecutter chisels away all day on tombstones for the newly dead. The little clinking sounds penetrate even to this steep roof, and I fancy he has carved upon the unyielding stone: "Good-by, Arcady, good-by, good-by."

SPRING FEVER.

SPRING FEVER.

It has always seemed to me to be an unequal distribution of things that poor people should, as it were, be hung about the neck by the millstones of luxurious desires and tastes that are only to be gratified with much money.

Why should a poor person like to do nothing at all, or love to ride in a carriage, or want to go in the springtime for long walks by the river on week days, when the spade, the desk, the counter, are the imperative rulers?

Why should the poor love beautiful books that they may not buy; why should the poor have hungry longings to go away?

Why does not fate give unto the rich the things that belong to the rich, and keep only for the poor the dulled desire, the sluggish hope, the uninspired hour?

Why, Fate, Nature, Providence, call it what you will, is kinder to the dumb animal. The mule can dine comfortably on a few thistles and does not sigh for champagne and snipe. But the poor man has quite as keen an appetite for the preserved rose-leaves of luxurious living as the most potent millionaire in the land.

Still it is not a good thing to have evil thoughts

of the rich. It is wiser to be guarded in what you say of them because "the world goes up, and the world goes down, and sunshine follows the rain," and the day may be coming when you will be rich yourself, and then it would be embarrassing to be obliged to adjust the old Anarchist in you to the new aristocrat! It would be quite as bad as marrying a man of whom you had publicly disapproved and made fun—and yet many a woman has had to come to that.

A carriage rolled by. How ladylike and comfortable looked its lonely occupant leaning on her cushions. Out for the morning air? Well, so was I. So was yonder bird—tuning up in yonder tree. The very workman on the booming river stopped to sniff at the willow buds fragrancing the sunshine.

It was early morning and these reflections were made out on the wee bit of gallery, under the rose as it were—a feeble, uncertain-minded rose, that has not as yet decided that where we lodge it shall lodge, and that our gods shall be its gods, and which has only put out a shy, experimental bud or so, testing our flower-love as a new-comer might try to test our hearts. Well, well, the folk that are kind to strangers and to flowers ought to assay pretty well.

It was sweet, still, early, and sunshiny out there, and a beautiful peach-tree in full springtime bloom flung this way and that out to the air, out to the sunshine, out to the world, all the airy, delicate daintiness of its shell-pink petals, so that

the tiny garden seemed to be fairly blushing and frothing over with joy.

From my next door neighbor's yard an ambitious honeysuckle was blowing its red trumpets almost in my face, and on the gate-post a small, unafraid chameleon—a little spring song all to himself—turned his pretty throat this way and that. He had a brand-new look about him, and presently he ran here and there, skipping along the peach tree and swinging on the honeysuckle vine and finally sprawling on the fence—one of God's rare, uncursed creatures with nothing to do!

Twice someone had called out from the dusky dullness of my room the grim reminder that I had best get to work, and then it was I had said I did not want to work.

Well, who does, in the springtime, when hedges sprout and all the world is floating in rosy clouds of bloom? I said I was sick—so I was—sick of work—and the lazy little chameleon looked up at me with a sympathetic eye.

Once, when we were crossing the ocean, I walked the deck with the gloomy, unresponsive first mate, who seemed to have the weather in his bones. It was a gray day, and the ocean looked like a huge bowlful of warmed-over gravy, listlessly slopping this way and that, and the greasy sky hung low, as if it had nervous prostration and did not in the least care whether it fell into the sea or not. "It is a dreadful thing to be seasick," I remarked, feeling around for that sympathy a woman always wants when she is ill.

The first mate glared at me with a fine disdain. "Madam," said he, "It is not half so dreadful as being sick of the sea."

I wonder if that fine lady rolling by her in coupé knows she is lonely, or if she would say to be sick of work is not half so bad as to be sick of nothing to do?

In the room at my back a faithful old turbaned servitor, as fat as faithful, is leaning out the window gossiping with a neighbor.

"How's yo' maddam to-day, Mis' Juley Robinson?" asks the neighbor. "Is she feeling any better?"

"Sho!" answered the faithful old wiseacre, "they ain't nothin' the matter with my maddam; she's jist rattin'."

I don't believe you will find that picturesque word in the Unabridged. To know its full meaning you must go to the saw-mill, to the steamboat, and the field, and there you will see how the lazy workers pretending to be hard at it are only pretending. That is "rattin'." Did you never watch a team of horses pull up hill and see one smart rascal "rat" on the other — holding back, not enough to be noticed, so he hopes, but yet managing that the other fellow shall carry all the load? And is it not so in life, are not there always lazy ones "rattin'" on the willing workers?

Oh, how pleasant it would be to live a chameleon on a fence, with no conscience to be stung at the charge of "rattin'."

I wonder what this soft inertia is that gets into the body when the blooming-time of trees has come : this going-away feeling, this subtle sympathy with bud and blossom, this tender leaning to mother earth ? Do n't you know it must have been a spring morning, that first day in Eden? And in Eden it was the pre-arranged plan that there was to be no work.

Once I rested from the heat of the day in the grassy shadows of Stoke Pogis churchyard, where Gray wrote his Elegy — perfectest poem — with a dear and distinguished author, and she leaned her gray head on the tomb and nursed her white hand in the soft grasses, and said that she would not be afraid to lie in that garden, because she somehow felt sure she could breathe under those blowing grasses. I think somehow it was only the primeval Eve in her, all unafraid of the earth into which some day her great heart shall melt down, like a child losing itself in its mother's bosom.

Dear worker, I wonder if there are many besides you and I who see the courage of keeping at the daily grind? No applause comes from the act; to do one's duty, they tell us, is not fine; but, after all, is it not heroic to keep on like a ship at sea, through the storm, against the winds blowing the other way? But you have got on board a cargo bound for a certain port; and, more precious than that, you carry dear souls who look to you to be taken to haven — to carry them safely over

the seas. And so, what if the winds do blow the other way, you keep on even when, like the home-longing sailor, your heart is sick of the sea.

I wonder if you know what it is to be going down to your work those dewy, flowered-scented Monday mornings when all along the way you see how Nature writes her spring song in purple carols of wisteria that climb to the very top of the trees. Even along the fashionable avenue, all stone-curbed as it is, nature manages to slip in a foot-note, as it were, of dandelions and daisies, and a little, wild, nameless blossom, like a flower foundling, that I hope will find hospital and home in your heart.

How blue is the sky overhead; not rich and deep, but tender and new, and as the car bumps along over the cross-streets you have glimpses of no-thoroughfares in which one, later on, may gather hay while the sun shines.

Oh, I wonder if the passengers resting in the big canvas chairs on the middle decks—resting, resting, resting—ever think on the man at the look-out, the man at the wheel! Oh, I wonder does the idle lady ever note the clerk at his monotonous desk!

And I wonder if the rich one in the car ever thinks on the splendid strength and unquenched courage of the worker who drudges dully on without compliment from the "boss" or even a raise of salary. The tired clerk who hands out to the rich employer the route and itinerary of travel and who shows in his gray face no hint of

the unsatisfied longing—the unquenched thirst for rest, only rest that has been with him since first he put on the monk's habit of self-denial and of work—gets no reward for all his faithfulness. Oh, in this springtime hour something gets into the bones that feels like a sweet pall; it smooths out all the inequalities, and under its influence you and I seem to be temporarily rich, and about to rest, and about to go away into the Sunshine Land where it is always afternoon.

In the shop stands the inevitable clerk—always there; and she shows to the self-absorbed customer the traveling robe and bonnet and veil, and listens to the story of the trip away with respectful and friendly interest—she who never goes away—in whose veins the spring fever burns and burns, and spends itself on the famished heart and undeveloped nature.

In the factory the young, gray eyes bend over the weaving of the soft fabric that is to be somebody's going-away dress. Beyond the high red walls lies the rim of the river and the slender masts of ships bound for far-off seas. But for her is only the old, accustomed place, the self-same view, the eternal cobweb of the changing masts on changing ships—the every-day work and the old unextinguished fever of going away that will find but one satisfaction, and that is when there comes the muffled oar for the dark voyage over the Lonely River that I pray will lead, for her, into a summer land.

The bees hum in the pink tree before the door,

and from off the river breathes the breath of willow buds.

How can one work in such sweet sunshine as this? Over the tree-tops, beside the tall April-green grasses on the levee, I see the slender masts of a ship that lies there loading lumber. Day after day I go and watch the long, scented planks of pine and cypress slipped into the dark hold. Where are they going? What are they to become? Homes for newly-mated lovers, cradles for innocence, coffins for dead despair and weariness? But the boat pulls at its tether just as you and I pull at ours!

Oh for the lilies that toil not; oh for the flowers that do not spin!

What is this sweet sap that rises in our veins, that makes us lean to loading ships and watch with envy the swift-winged swallow floating on its cloud-like wing that will bear it off to other worlds?

Come to the river side; there are the salt-crusted ships and the hanging anchors; there are the anxious sails and the restless rudder. Pin a posy on your gown—not the heavy-odored orange blossom that reminds one of midnoon, but rather a purple cluster of wisteria, an airy spray of plum bloom, a bit of yellow jonquil—these fit the season of our fancy and nurture in us that annual affection we call "spring fever."

THE MODERN TURK.

THE MODERN TURK.

By every poet and every thinker the ideal of earthly happiness is represented in a home.

Through all our changing conditions of civilization, it is at least suggestive that the typical expression of the ideal home has not changed at all.

Set an artist to paint a home, and he will make it the picture of a gabled cottage, thatched with rose vines, where a baby plays with the shadow flowers knit by the sun on the cool stone porch, and where the young mother sits knitting, while the father is away at work in the forge or field.

The novelist's home in Spain is not a castle. It will be a cheerful, homely abode, on whose ample hearth the torch of love is flaming. The curtains are drawn in the cozy room, the kettle and the cricket sing together on the hearth, and when the bread-winner comes at night the white cloth is spread, the lamp burns brightly, and the mild-eyed mistress of the home is as daintily sweet as the rose at her throat or the child in her arms.

It was a poet whose home was almost always only in Spain who wrote:

Musingly sit I on the settle,
By the firelight's cheerful blaze,
Listening to the busy kettle,
Humming long forgotten lays.

We are apparently rapidly approaching a state when everything concerning existence is to be a mere matter of a faucet.

I see in the papers that the phonograph is to be used as a mechanical teacher of elocution; and from this progression it is surely not a far cry to the day when instead of academies and colleges our children will stop at home and be given an educational pill or thirty drops of the elixir of information three times a day.

Sentiment, religion, music, dinner, a glass of something hot on winter nights are to be turned on by means of a stop-cock at the head of one's bed. This mighty change is merely the transcription or modern realization of the old prophetic story of Aladdin and his lamp.

But the one thing that has not changed is the popular ideal of a charming home. Never in fancy or when we build it best in Spain is it electric-lighted or run by dumb waiters.

We like the ocular demonstration of our comfort. There is something in us, fine but material, that delights in the crackling logs on the wide hearth, in the kitten purring before the fire, in the tick-tack of the old clock in the far corner by the door. When a lonely man or a lonely woman begins to dream of a home and home joys, it is of some such home as this. There may be plush

portieres and a piano, but beyond it all and dominant is that kettle humming on the hearth.

Emerson said the domestic man who loves nothing so well as the ticking of his kitchen clock has solaces that no one dreams of.

The prettiest state of affairs I know is to hear a young couple planning married life. It is truly enough a chateau in Spain, because there is scarcely room on earth for a life so free, so private, so perfect as that which they are going to live.

Or is it a rose-colored tent set in a flowery plain, with openings free as the air—no locks nor latch-keys there, you know—with always the soft joyance of spring sunshine crisping the air. How mated they are to be—or rather how mated he is to be. He will fetch and carry for her and lie in the violets prone, that she, his Amazon empress —She-who-must-be-obeyed—may set her foot upon his neck. Thus—ten days before taking the marriage vows.

Ten years after the little Amazon empress, with her crown all gone, her word no one's law, timidly approaches her Turk, her shah, her sultan, and asks him for enough money to get her and the children each a three-cent challie off a bargain counter in a big store, and he asks her what she did with the money he gave her last week.

The truth of the matter is that while all the world has been progressing, while we have discovered edible electricity and a machine for teaching the arts by electricity, while, in fact, the

all-powerful faucet at the head of one's bed, and whose other name is Electra, can turn on or off all the necessities, conveniences, refinements, and luxuries of life; while all this has been going on, I say, man has remained through all his domestic nature a Turk, and his home is often a modernized harem.

They used to call Coleridge the Alnaschar of literature, because he was always planning magnificent intellectual enterprises which he never carried out. The average young man in love is the Alnaschar of matrimony, but the average young man married may very often be taken for next of kin to Blue Beard.

Men, even the most hot-headed and impulsive, rarely marry on impulse. Nothing is so valuable to a woman as her impulse, particularly if it is one of sentiment. She takes no account as the man does of the expenditure of self; she is ready for any sort of self-sacrifice if only her heart give the signal.

But it is almost never so with a man. He plans his life, his love, his romance, his marriage with an eye to commodity. In fact, commodity is the real fabric of his life, although I do admit there may come pure days and long afternoons when he is content to embroider the fabric with a fringe of lotus flowers. It is the child-side of him stopping to play in the clover-fields and making himself a daisy chain that his wrists may snap in a second when the mood changes and the perfume of the daisies is gone.

In this preparation for his marriage, this young man is doing that which is best for himself. He is carefully looking out for himself, and if he finds out that the girl he so madly loves—his love is the lotus flower framing in commodity—has hereditary insanity, or scrofula, or consumption in her family, that might blight his name or taint his children, the chances are that he will go off and madly love some other girl who will be safer and more satisfactory.

Once being married, however, this modern young man, who has not the least or remotest idea in the world that he is a Turk, who feels in all his nature that he is a hero, a gentleman, and a lover, begins to arrange his new domain.

He does not, as the years go by, give the matter much thought, but he simply assumes that his wife is his, not only to love and cherish, but his just as his pipe is his, his hat is his, or his horse is his.

He would be frankly amused if she should request the privilege of setting up an independent intellect, a separate opinion, a separate individuality, a separate will power.

"Why, my darling," he would cry, kissing her; "you do n't think I am going to be a Turk, do you?"

He is very proud over his liberality to his wife, and talks in so grand a way that you, to whom all this is new, are overjoyed, and think, well here is an ideal husband and wife—yoked in the exercise of noble thought, master and

mistress, not master and slave, nor Turk and concubine.

The modern Turk assumes that what he likes his wife must like, whether it relates to dinner, to society, to literature, to amusements. He does this innocently, not knowing he is a Turk, since it is a foregone conclusion in his own mind that his point of view is best and the only one possible.

The modern Turk in a great measure orders the goings and comings of his wife. She can scarcely promise to aid a charity unless she first asks his permission. She may not join a literary club or a church sewing-society without he agrees to it. If she accepts an invitation in his name which does not please him, that settles it—they do n't go. Upon the rare occasions when she has had a half holiday away from her harem she must visit with an eye on the clock. There will be no mercy shown should she be out five minutes beyond the dinner hour.

It is not a very lovely spectacle, that of a woman who is afraid of her husband. Not afraid that he will beat her, but that he will anguish her with his violent temper, his coarse invective, his insulting abuse; that he will humiliate her before her servants, and rub into her heart-wounds the salt of his arbitrary assumption.

In the life of the modern Turk it is interesting to ask, where does the wife come in, anyhow? It is "my house," "my home," "my flowers," "my trees," "my children," "my money." The wife

enjoys these things because her husband is good to her, and she may continue to enjoy them so long as she behaves herself and obeys him.

Possibly she may not venture to arrange the furniture in her—or rather his—house to suit her tastes, to cut the flowers for the hospital, to punish the children according to her judgment, to spend any money without closely accounting for it, but the uses of the home and its privileges are hers just up to the length of the chain and no farther. She must not interfere with her husband or his affairs. If he is out of temper she must tiptoe through the house and soothe him out of it. He will have no patience with her weaknesses, trivialities, or foibles, because he was never wrong in his life, according to his own estimate of himself and her sad, private statistics. But if there is any forgiving to be done she must do it.

It is not every professedly polite and agreeable man whose manner and temper and character can stand the private test of domestic life. In his community he is known to be a gentleman. He dresses like one, lives like one, drinks like one, and in public acts like one.

Whatever of selfishness, rudeness, boorishness there may be in his nature is exclusively for home consumption. If a man can't be free in his own house, where on earth can he be free, I wonder? So this gentleman of the street indulges in his home in a *negligé* of manner and costume and of personal habit that genuinely disgusts the refined

and dainty woman who has contracted to love him through good and ill.

It seems a dreadful thing to say, but it is true, that there are professional gentlemen who, at their own tables, unless outsiders are present, have no "table manners" at all. What a saving remnant of barbarism is that fellow who dips his own bit of bread into the meat dish; who forgets to serve his wife; who leaves the table so soon as he has finished feeding, and who, while at table, never opens his mouth save to put something in it! A great deal of stuff is written, and I have written a good deal of it myself, all of which I hereby reiterate about the duty of women making homes happy. But it is also true that a man's duty to his home is not solely of a financial nature.

I fancy most any woman would quite as willingly take a beating as continual fault-finding, ill-temper, exhibitions of ill-breeding and grossness. Nothing can be more humiliating to a refined woman than to be daily subjected to slovenly familiarities and vulgarities. It requires a granite patience to submit silently to one who is only endurable so long as he has his own way, who will brook interference from a servant more gently than he will from his own wife, who does what he pleases and makes his wife do so also.

The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table said a long while since that every wife has her private opinion of John. It is quite possible for her to love him, and yet be sometimes a little ashamed of him—of his rough manner to her, that his nature

is less fine than she thought, his integrity less firm, his mind less pure. Often she must educate him in many of the essentials of decent life; and educate him she does, even if he remains more or less a Turk in the privacy of his home. He gets from her, her talk, her manners, her companions, his opinions of women and society. If he sneers at these, one of two evils has surely happened, he has either married a fool or a marplot. It is the woman of noble nature who makes it the rule of her life to say nothing to the hurt of the least of her sex in the presence of her husband or sons.

Men are fond of telling us, as a sort of salve to wounded dignity, that the hand that spanks the baby rules the world. If this is so the modern Turk may be the product of unwise home influence in his youth.

It often happens that the tragedies of a housekeeping woman's life are little sordid affairs that she must keep to herself and which no man with an equal brain, ambition, pride, and strength would endure dumbly for an hour. These are gnats that sting grievously through their persistence, each one too trivial to be complained of. Her Turk does not realize that to endure these requires patience any more than he realizes that a woman who has nothing to do save look after her house may, in the end, work harder than he at his desk. Sometimes he fails to comprehend that pain may come to her, that her tired back is ready to give out under the burden, that she needs not only rest,

but sympathy for her position and its duties, and respect for her high, responsible office.

The spirit of a proud-hearted woman may be broken by a man who belittles her place in his household, who manages to make her feel and others feel that she does nothing that another could not do equally well.

We all work better for praise and encouragement given us by our employers. The wife will most readily honor her home and her name who is first honored by her husband, assured of his trust, respect for her as an individual, and his confidence in her judgment and fitness to manage her share of the business, which is the home.

The soul grows or it shrivels. Hope has no dead levels. Ambition is always attacking a mountain, and the winning time is not when the height is gained, but when the sun comes over the far-off purple peaks, and smiles roseate down into the foothills where the climber's plodding, eager feet are pressing the dew from the tangled vines.

The wife's world—nay, the woman's world—is not always lovely. It is often set to the tune of seam and gusset and band; it is filled with dingy economies and rasping worries; her brow must be puckered with plans, not how to save the state, but how to cut down the statesman's trousers into knee breeches for his eldest boy.

These things are not ignoble, but often the woman is made to feel that they are, and that her duties all accomplished, have, after all, not been

worth the doing. No sun shines on her working world, no roses grow there. The soul shrivels; ambition dies out, and her spirit is broken, so that only a cattle-like docility and a hopeless, commonplace view of life is hers. The bloom is gone; the perfume evaporated; and life has lost its finest flavor.

The true gentleman is one whose politeness begins at home. He is polite in little things, and never forgets that when his wife married him he was her ideal of everything noble, honorable, manly, and chivalric.

But the modern Turk is no hero to his own wife. He is simply her employer, willing to give her board wages for the performance of domestic duties; doling out money by the pence to her; regulating her life as if she were a clock to keep in time by the sun of his existence; doing her thinking for her.

Sometimes there is one thought which the wife of the Turk, like the wife of Numa Roumestan, keeps sadly to herself—it is that her fine gentleman is "the joy of the street and the sorrow of the home."

THOUGHTS OF HAPPIER DAYS.

THOUGHTS OF HAPPIER DAYS.

The morning's mail brought me this letter:

Mrs. Catharine Cole: Madam—As I have always noticed in reading your letters in the Sunday paper the good advice you give, I would like your advice in some little matters of my own; and to begin at the beginning, I am getting rather dissatisfied at my way of living, for from Monday morning till Sunday it is get up in the morning, get breakfast, go to market, clean up the house and sew the rest of the day; and, with a small amount of money, it is to see nothing and know nothing—only the same tune, day in and day out. Now to try and get a position in a store, or take sewing from the stores, is next to starvation, so what would you advise a woman to do whereby she might earn a little money to try in this life to spend her time happy and contented? I feel terribly dissatisfied and discontented, for if a word is mentioned about going to any kind of a place of amusement, where it costs the smallest sum of money, the first cry is we can't afford it. So, of course, the result is stay at home, for pleasure to some women in this world is something not to be thought of; but I for one am tired of it, and I have come to the conclusion that if God will help those that help themselves he will help me; so, can you tell me what would be a good plan whereby I might make a start? If you can and will answer in next Sunday's paper you will confer a great favor on one who will greatly appreciate the same.

Another woman, with a heart throbbing with life and pain, once wrote a poem that is more like the letter I have copied above than anything of which I can think. Often have I quoted it in

these columns, because it seemed to mean so much that is dear to the human heart, and to contain such inexpressible comfort. To-day it echoes back to me like bars of music that fit the strong, sad, simple words of the letter that came to me in the morning's mail. Jean Ingelow sang:

When I remember, something promised me,
  But which I never had, nor can have now,
Because the promiser I no more see
  In countries that accord with mortal vow,
When I remember this, I mourn—but yet
My happier days are not the days when I forget.

God has given to that woman and to this, to you and to me, each our life. It fits us. It would not fit any other living being. It is ours, yours, mine, just as much as our features are our own and no other's. No one else can add to its beauty or lessen its ugliness. It is something He did not mean we should escape from, or grow away from, or run away from.

He plants the beautiful pine tree in the forest where the soil is sandy and suits it best, and there the tree is at its loveliest, at its greatest beauty, attains its noblest stature and is a king of pine trees,a very marvel of lofty trunk, of branching feathery crest, of beautiful sweet-smelling needles that knit in the sun and the wind a song that is sad and plaintive but of which no one could ever tire. No transplanted pine in a forest of stone houses, in an artificial conservatory of man's contriving could ever attain to such beauty as comes to the pine when it remains in its own native forest. It is the same way with women's hearts and

women's lives. God plants them in the soil that suits them best, and our better days are not the days when we repine, and our purer days are not the days when we rebel; but our happier days are surely the days when we do not forget.

Sometimes we read in the newspapers or hear from others of the big events that happen to other persons whom perhaps we know. This one has drawn a prize in the lottery; that one has had an invitation to go to Europe; a third one has married the lover for whom she had waited so faithfully while the world laughed at her. Oh, such blessed joys have come to others—to others whom we know so well that we are infected with a sort of fever of enthusiasm and expectancy. If to them, why may not such good things happen to us? Why may not the postman ring the bell and hand in over the gate to you or to me the letter that is to take sadness out of our days, the pinch of poverty from off our skins, and give us instead content and peace and a life that is free from such sharp woe?

But you are born to your life and I am born to mine. God has planted us in the right soil. He has put the blue sky over our heads, and if it is often clouded and pent with rain, he has meant us to get good from the shadow and sweetness from the shower, and to smile and be glad whenever the tender blue of his heaven smiles down on us. Oh, is there any life that does not fret under its routine? Is there any heart that does not hunger for more joy and more praise? Is

there any soul that would not be the sweeter for more sunshine and the happier for more love and more pleasant little events ?

That is what the song says and what the song means: that our better days will not be the days when we forget. The beauty of life is in growing. The happiness of life is in striving. How many women in the world are there who have only been made beautiful by suffering ! How many hearts have only grown tender from having ached very hard! It is what we see of life and what we know and what we feel and what we endure and suffer that makes us beautiful. It is wanting things and having to do without them that makes us gentle over the needs of others. The beautiful women in this world are the all but divine Marys and Marthas who have known what it was to sit all night alone with grief ; who have broken their hearts over little woes that others could not know nor understand ; who have gone alone and in the dark, each into her own Gethsemane, and there spent long hours in voiceless travail.

Oh, when I meet you in the street car and we look into each other's eyes, and perhaps pass the time of day with each other, what do we know of each other's hearts, of each other's lives? What is it that stings us, and taunts us, and what are the little joys missed out of our days? What wretched economies fret our souls, what loveless days are ours ! What long stories of self-denials, of cuttings and contrivings, of dull routine and drudgery we could tell, if only you and I would

open out our hearts to each other. Do you not know all this, and feel it all, but would you dare to let go of yourself and spend your heart and strength in telling it all to me?

Who praises you for the good you do? Who takes note of the beautiful stitches you put into your sewing; of the patient way in which you brush and sweep and clean? Oh, there is a heartache in not being praised for what one does; there is a heartache in not having things and in giving up things; but with all the heartache our better days, our purer days, and our happier days are the days when we remember the lack in our lives and try to be brave and endure to the end.

No song that was ever sung, and no picture that was ever painted, is more beautiful than the patient embroidery of a tired woman's needle over the hole in the heel of a stocking. No great woman who ever stood up to battle for her sex or for humanity; no Joan of Arc nor Florence Nightingale nor Lucretia Mott is greater in God's sight than the heart-aching, wearied, little housewife and fire-tender who, day in and day out, year in and year out, gets up, gets breakfast, cleans house, goes to market, and sews all day — who sometimes cries out like an agonized woman in childbirth pains — "I cannot bear it; I cannot endure any more" — but who does endure, and who does bear her sufferings and her neglects and privations till life is done.

We cannot always be patient, for we are human. The strongest pine tree bends to the storm, and

sometimes succumbs to it; but bending and enduring is growing, and the best of life can only come to us while we are growing. What is life? It is to know and to see and to feel the blue sky overhead, and to touch palms, or souls, with just one human being; to feel the joys and sorrows of just one other of God's creatures. If we can feel for one we can feel for all. We do not live until we comprehend the shames, the needs, the pain, the joys that are common to us all.

You may have plenty to eat, and good clothes to wear, and money for the theater; but these things do not make up life. Life is made up of loving and losing and longing, of patient waiting and of constantly hoping. How many times, without any warning, does the bent, sick human body, the poor fretted body that is denied so much, that endures so much, all but give out? How many times does the writer and the teacher and the actor, the seamstress, the washwoman, the cook in us, cry out, "This is the end, I can do no more; some one else must finish that which I have begun?"

But no one else can finish your work or mine, and in our souls we know it; for, after that one loud cry, do we not wipe away the tears that no one notes, and do we not, all unencouraged, all uncomforted, go back to our task and take up the beautiful life that is yours and mine?

Oh, I tell you there are very few lives after all that are unlovely. There are wicked women and men in the world; but for every wicked woman

there are ten good ones, and the only unlovely lives are those of people who cannot feel for the sufferings and joys of others, and who, therefore, make no effort to add to the content and happiness of others. Is there nothing beautiful in the life of the woman who gets up early, goes to market, gets breakfast, cleans up her house, and then sews all day? Is there nothing beautiful in her clean and dainty rooms—however cheap and simple—in her own wholesome face that reflects God's sky and his sunrise? Is there nothing beautiful in the pretty way she serves the morning meal, in her smile and sweet service? Is there nothing beautiful in the way she bends all day at "seam and gusset and band," working for others, but thinking on the things she must do without, and learning the fine and noble duty of patient waiting and hoping? Oh, to my mind the life of such a woman is like a statue carved by Phidias. It is a thing exquisitely chiseled and perfect. It is the song that was never sung—the unwritten, tender song without words. It is the letter that never came. It is sweeter and better and purer and more unselfish than any great deed of hero, because it is unheralded, unknown, and because its beauty and its patience and its sadness and its hope is a secret that wings like a white dove its way only between her and her God.

No plaint in the world could be more sad than the plaint that is in the letter that I have placed here above Jean Ingelow's song. It was written the day when she could endure no more — that

rare day when the brave spirit trembles in doubt and fear, when the brave heart lets go for a moment of its grasp on hope.

Can anything be more barren than a commonplace life hungry for a few little amusements? Can anything be more sordid than the cry, the selfish cry, "We can't afford it?" Is it not hard to sit at home and see some one else make the coveted trip, some one else receive the expected gift, some one else reading the longed-for letter? Are not these disappointments hard to endure? Try them and see. In our commonplace lives we need commonplace joys. Oh, I cannot express in the poor words of my petty vocabulary the heartaches, the temptations, the longings, the sadness of doing without, that go to make up so much of life for you and me. But overhead is the blue sky: the song is there; the music is there. the poem is there;—and with uplifted gaze we rediscover that which we had forgotten, and the cook, the seamstress, the teacher, the worker that is our human shape, turns again to the place God meant us to fill, and life for us flows on again.

Who can fathom the depths of life of this little home-tender and patient sewer of long seams? Only another woman may guess at the aggravating little toils and troubles that make up life for her. Smoky stoves, bread that will not rise, needles that break, thread that knots, pots that will not boil, babies that fret ceaselessly, dishes to wash, beds to make, knives to clean, floors to sweep, stockings to darn, and no kind words, no

unexpected pleasant events, no outings, no new books, no evenings at the lake, no new gowns. How is a woman to grow beautiful under a life of such petty, ugly, rasping, gnat-like miseries? The finely tempered steel of patience, the hopeful heart, the granite temper—all these uplift the spirit and make its owner lovely and happy. The heart of a woman is a crystal with many facets. You must hold it up to the light and let the sun shine through it to see how pure and beautiful it is even with its little blemishes of earth.

At one time in the foreign telegrams was published an account of the sailing from France of a young priest bound for the leper settlement in the Sandwich Islands. The telegram, so far as I can recollect, went on to say that the priest then on the island was very shortly to die of this horrible disease, and that the chief sorrow of his last days was the fear that when he should be dead and gone there would be no one to take up his missionary work, and that the doomed wretches would live out the little span of their anguished days and die without the sweet and sacred sacraments of the church. But at the last moment a young French priest came forward and said he would go to the leper settlement, and the telegram announced to all the world his departure. I can fancy him moving about the steamer, bright-faced, cheery, gentle, polite, and gallant to the ladies, tender and sympathetic to the children and the old, manly, cheerful, and unaffected withal, and no one would guess from his ways and his

talk that he was bound for a leper settlement; for a life more horrid than that of any exile rotting in Siberian mines; that he has taken upon himself a death the most disgusting, and painful that mortal man can die.

Years ago just such another young priest made just such a voyage, and when the long sail was over he found himself on a desolate shore surrounded and welcomed by sad-eyed shapes with scaly skins and flesh dropping from the bones. Perhaps they pressed about him in dull curiosity, and it must have seemed some awful nightmare from which he should presently awake. But as he looked from one blear-eyed wretch to the other; as he noted their falling rags, the naked legs, the misshapen hands from which the fingers were falling joint by joint; when he saw their grinning smiles, their hopeless eyes, felt their fetid breath on his own clean brow,—his brave soul must have fainted within him. For the future, while life lasted, these were to be his intimates; from these he would be infected with disease, and to these he must be friend, companion, priest, and comforter. But God's sunshine was over his head, and God's patience and hope were in his heart, and made him endure and finally find out the beauty and holiness of his life.

At last he, too, became a leper, and the news came that he was dying. Alive he could not, if he would, escape his duty and his place; poor and lonesome and loveless as it was in the world. God planted him in that soil just as He placed

you in your home to do and to be and to endure.

When life is done for the old priest, or for you or for me, when the long voyage is ended and we look for the last time into the blue sky from which we have drawn so much content—for the blue sky is God's book and the stars are His promises and sweet battle-hymns; when we look, I say, for the last time with mortal eyes into this blue,—do you not think we shall be the happier for remembering how faithfully we worked; how tirelessly we plodded on; how truly we longed for good things we never had; how bravely we did without?

And the answer to the strong plaint in the woman's letter is in Jean Ingelow's song:

> **It makes me sad to think on this, but yet**
> **My days will not be better days, should I forget.**

"CHARGE IT."

"CHARGE IT."

To an honest man the predicament of owing money which he has no means of paying is a misfortune serious enough to murder sleep. Often this mental punishment is sharpened by the knowledge that he had brought the difficulty and trouble on himself by his own foolishness and lack of thought.

It is the easiest thing in the world to borrow money, or to get into the habit of running bills at stores and shops — of living on the credit system — but not until he is seriously involved does the workingman or person of small means realize that he has put a millstone around his neck.

It is said that a nation without a debt is not in a healthy condition, but this, at least, is not the right sort of stimulus for a small family, or calculated to increase their truthfulness, their independence, or their fair reputation.

The merchant who engages in an absolutely cash business does not often fail; neither does the family. "Charge it" is a phrase that makes drunkards, liars, thieves and dead beats — that brings shame on innocent heads and suffering on innocent victims.

I cannot undertake to explain why, but the

woman who has credit at a large store, who is politely flattered by the clerks into buying this or that article, and who, when the purchase is concluded, has only to say superbly, "Charge it," or who, perhaps, does not need to say even that, so well known is she — so desirable her patronage, feels distinctly superior to the woman who humbly pays cash.

Is it not a foregone conclusion that when one buys on credit one buys double, and that everything becomes a temptation? The woman who runs a bill often deludes herself with the specious argument that when she buys a big bargain that she does not want, because it is a big bargain, she is saving money in the long run. White elephants at fifteen cents a dozen would not be cheap if one did not need them. A debt to be met at the end of the month is more expensive than a bolt of China silk off a bargain counter that will come into use next summer.

Many a great business man can trace his sensational failure to his foolish wife's extravagant habit of running bills, and her obstinate determination not to see that the day of payment could not be indefinitely staved off.

But for every big sensational failure, how many little families are there whose forlorn histories are too humble to reach the public, but who are caught in the inextricable toils of petty debts acquired through the medium of a passbook at the grocery store, with the butcher, and at the fruit shop?

Who does not know of that little family who, starting out in life fairly, with good health, a fair income and pleasant prospects, are halted on the way by debts of a nature to disgrace them — debts incurred through foolish pride, culpable vanity, crazy generosity, and ignorance and thoughtlessness? A young father who can't afford to give his wife a Sunday dress, or new curtains for her parlor, is all wrong when he invites a crowd of fair-weather friends home to a supper of oysters which he has had "charged."

"I can make it up somehow out of the housekeeping money," is the way the giddy wife comforts herself when she buys on credit a bracelet or a tea-gown too fine for the size of her house, too showy for her station in life, to expensive for her husband's income.

There are women whose pride is so great that they find it more honorable to owe a nurse-girl two or three months' wages, and pay her in dribs and drabs, than to carry and care for their own babies.

What do we think of the silly young man who is in bad debt to us for money lent, yet invites us out to a champagne supper? The friendliest conclusion is that when he ordered the supper off some other victim he said, "Charge it."

To the little family trying to get on in the world — to put by money for the children's schooling, for the cozy home they hope to own some day—the passbook is an evil institution. At the end of the month it will be largely a

record of extravagances, and anything is extravagant that we have not the money to pay for. There will be expensive grocery lunches of cheese and sardines, to save the trouble of cooking; there will be a gallon or so of wine, or a dozen bottles of needless beer, hastily sent for to entertain people whose private comments and criticism on the hospitality they were greedy to accept were not always generous or sympathetic.

The wanton buyer is one who always charges things. She looks around a store to see what she can buy next. What she can pay for now is not the thing at all. Watch her in the grocery, sending a vague eye over the shelves. "Oh, yes," she says to the clerk, "and send some olives, please, and some potted quail and jam." She would order more, only she is in a hurry. The clerks know her well. She is slow pay, but by dint of dunning they manage to collect during the year enough to give hopes of getting it all in the end.

Tradesmen soon know the house that is run on the passbook system—a poor expensive system at best, even for the head who can meet all the bills, but total ruin some day for the foolish family who find it cheaper to owe than to pay, easier to borrow than to earn.

Meanwhile the family that "charges" all of its legitimate expenditures is not saving money for the pay day. It is very human to forget that, after the bread and ham is eaten, it still must be paid for, and so the actual cash goes.

Harry finds he has bank bills in his wallet, so why not go to the theater or to the lake. A supper here, a lunch there, a bunch of flowers there, a luxurious carriage; on another occasion a princely tip to a waiter, or a costly gift to some child whose father, Harry thinks, he ought to work; a night of treating with the boys—and lo! in a month the money is all gone, and still the house rent is to be paid, the butcher and baker and washerwoman are to be paid, the coal man has sent twice for his money, and over and above all, hovering like a greasy, evil genius, is that temptation to extravagance and thriftlessness—the grocery passbook.

It may be all right for rich people to run bills at stores, but no poor person or young man working on a small salary can afford to buy anything for which he cannot afford to pay cash.

How does he know that he can pay at the end of the month? Suppose he is ill; suppose he shall have lost his situation. He can be sued; he will be if he does not pay; and, at all events, in shame, remorse, and sorrow the risk he incurs is equally great with that of the man who allows him to "charge it."

When a hundred-dollar-a-month young man finds himself with half a dozen unpaid bills renewed on his hands it is time to call a halt. It is just as surely certain that the disease of "charging it" has hold of him as the palsied hand of the drunkard gives him warning that he must stop his liquor. Sometimes the man has sense enough

to abstain from liquor; but the man who is living on credit plunges in deeper and deeper until his name becomes the synonym of bad debt, and he is on the way to development into a first-class dead-beat.

It is certain that a great and rich man like Peter Cooper, who began to make his way in the world when he married, did not keep a slate in any saloon, nor run a credit book with any dealer. He paid as he went. It is best; it is, from a worldly point of view, the shrewdest thing to do, and in the end it enables one to travel farther.

The strongest argument against the credit system lies in the fact that merchants generally solicit your trade on an open account. They will usually get their money some day, and they know the woman who runs a bill buys more than the woman who pays cash. The housewife is always amazed at the footing up of her monthly accounts.

A sort of sturdy health and wholesome prosperity seems to reign in that home where no debts are, and wise indeed, is that sweet young chatelaine who insists that into her pretty home there shall come no luxury or embellishment that has not been paid for—"cash down."

OLD THINGS.

217909

OLD THINGS.

I wonder if one were put to the pinch, would one be found willing to admit that old things are dull?

Sometimes I cannot but regret that in our country we have but a spurious and fictitious regard for the things that have been mellowed and yellowed and grayed by time.

We are new ourselves, and we boast of brand new houses and brand new furnishings. We take to new fashions kindly and to new customs, and we are always ready to change the paint on the house or to have a new fence; but, after all, is there not, deep down in our hearts, a shy and tender belief that something sweet, like mosses on an old manse, clings to the old, familiar habitation, the old, familiar chairs and tables, just as something sweet and loyal and unchangeable shines like sunlight in the dear, familiar faces of the old, old friends.

There are men and women whose hearts are spread out flat like the roots of a pine tree, and are too easily torn up. There are men and women who, despite all their affectation of staunchness, are most easily blown like ill-anchored ships from their moorings.

I read the other day of those Sahara sages that cling with a deep tenacity to their arid sands, and that cleave with fine, insinuating roots, that reach down delicate fingers clean to the heart of the wilderness, and that come storm and fury, sirocco and tempest, yet hold the closer and rise undaunted from the blast.

There are natures sweet like that. Their roots run too deep to be torn by any accident or effort of nature. God set them there to blossom or to fade, and when the withering hour of blight and ruin falls they bend to mother earth and melt their hearts down into hers without a pang, without a regret, and spill the perfume of their constancy willingly on her shrine.

John Howard Payne, that sad alien whose heart-cry voiced the nostalgia of a nation, had in his mind when far from home only a cottage sweet and humble. It was the old familiar home, tapestried over with vines holding in their airy chalices an unforgetable fragrance. This was the dream of his homesickness, the thing he longed for, not anything fine or luxurious; only the accustomed cup by the hearth, the song of the gentle bird in its willow cage, the dear, familiar presences and belongings.

Is there not something sickening sweet in the music of an old, well-known tune heard far from home? It bridges space with its aerial, intangible arches, and over these the heart gets back to the scene of its eviction.

At sea the homesick sailor looks up with long-

ing eyes at that dear and tender sky that bends like a benediction above. He knows that its blue mantle reaches on until it hangs above the home roof, so far away; it is as wide as the mercy and comprehension of God. He fancies it is the tangible hem and star-shot 'broidery of the blue garment of the Virgin as he has seen her in pictures. And over its blue voyage the white laden clouds—scudding like ships sailing away—phantom argosies freighted with longings back to the land of his love.

A stranger comes into our town with the one mission of finding an unforgotten but untended grave. He sees not the stately steeple, he hears not the adulation of welcome—the tribute of flowers is less than nothing to him. All earth presses sadly on one little grave. The roughest clod that his foot spurns is dear to him because it is kindred earth to his sweet clay.

Once on a time a merchant who had grown rich and who had married a worldly, fashionable wife, who lived in a stately mansion and moved like an automaton at the cues of society and its servants, ran away from it all, back to the old home in the dim, red village by the ferny bank of an unnavigable river.

He came to the railway that expended the last gasp of its tap ten miles from the river bank, and there he took the stage.

The stage! Dear reader, I hope you know it. That big, lumbering, red-painted mountain of leather and wood, with a capacious pocket on

behind for trunks, and so set upon leathern springs that all the time it rocks like a ship on the sea or a baby's cradle.

Interiorally there were three seats, each calculated to hold four persons. The middle one had for a back a leather band, and somehow, because when a lad it had seemed more like riding to sit on that seat, the merchant took it now.

The driver whipped up his four gray horses, and away the coach went through the woods where the elm trees were trellised with wild grape-vines. He could smell the perfume of those grape blossoms as if all the autumn of his life had become one spring.

The river was crossed on a small ferry, and the stage began to rumble its way up the "rock road." How well he remembered its very sound. Years ago, a bare-footed lad, he had stood at the front gate under the lilacs and listened to that rumble. Then it had had such a fascinating "going away" sound for him.

Ah! here was the turn in the road! And that was the steep, high, pink, brick house in which the Bears lived. It was Mrs. Bear who always brought the new babies to his mother. She was big and soft and comfortable, with bear-black hair and a little rim of fur over her upper lip. And that next house—the little one under the cypress vines—the Bennings lived there. Once a little baby died in that house, and filled with a country, morbid curiosity, he had begged to "sit up." He spent the night scratching the back of one of the

children. And so on, memory came back to light with its lamps all his way up the old, familiar hill. They set him down at the front door. Dully he resented this ; it seemed to make company of him.

But after all it was the old home, just as he had dreamed of it ; the stately rows of lilacs, the tangled beds of mild-eyed myrtle, the tiny walks all sprigged and sweet set with blue bottles and tulips. But the cherry tree under the kitchen window was gone, and that night after tea he asked his sister about it. "And how about Mr. Quarles, did he still lead in revivals, and did the white raspberries still grow up at Ingleside?"

He got up and went out and sat in the tall-backed rocker that used to hold her tiny little ladyship, his mother. How big he was, or how small she must have been !

And at night he went to sleep in a feather bed that smelled of lavender, and up in the corner, like a coffin on end, the old moon-faced clock ticked off in a wheezy whisper the laggard hours.

And when he waked in the morning he forgot, and thought he was a boy again.

How lovely it must be to live in that serene state where nothing changes ; where you keep forever the same kind faces before you. To waken in the morning, morning after morning, to the same things, to hear the silky rustle of the larch at your window, to mark the self-same spot on the floor that the sun crossed as if it was your own private equatorial line, to know from the tone

of his voice the rooster under your window; to say the same prayer; to come down stairs to the same comfortable rooms, the friendly familiar faces of the rosewood cabinets and the glowing fires that seemed to have been burning forever, like an altar torch.

Dear friend, is not this best? The same roses, the same surroundings, the same furniture, the same friends?

Memory is the twin sister of Sleep. She makes us forget all but the happy things just as sleep knits up the raveled sleeve of care.

Indeed, dear old friend, old things are never dull.

Have you not on an especial shelf a few friends whom age cannot wither nor custom stale their infinite variety? How about that marked copy of Emerson, that little black-browed volume of St. Thomas à Kempis, that travel-volume of etchings by Henry James, that fragrant book of legends from the German? All these are old, the sweet lavenders of your mind.

And not all the gaudy birthday books could recompense you for the loss of one of these. At night, when all the family have gone to bed, when even the dog stretches himself on the rug with a long sigh of comfort and gives himself over to a something irresponsible that you with all your brain cannot acquire, who is that lettered friend for whom you reach out the loyal palm? Is it not the book that has grown along with you, the

guide, philosopher, and friend, the merry jester, the sweet admonisher through many years?

When you move in May or dull November there is always something broken, and you learn, with twinges at the heart, that it was a little flower vase your mother had owned, or a bowl from which in those inextinguishable days you ate bread-crusts and new milk, and there is nothing consoling in the fragment of a quotation that comes into your mind beginning, "When the golden bowl is broken," and ending, you remember not how.

I like to visit in a house that has grown. You see all over it signs of its generous giving here and there, to make room for the new-comers. The little sleeping-rooms thrown out here and there, the cubbyholes devised, the closets tucked on, the shelves hung up. Do you think any mother in the land is glad to leave this old home of her loves for a palace?

I like to visit in a house where things are always the same. In the dark you can find your easiest chair, in the dark put your friendly hand on the book you love the best. It is like the loyal friend—you always know where to find him.

There is something sweet and wholesome, unvexed by fashion or style in such a house. All the world might go mad over sixteenth century furniture decorations, but this mistress has not in her clover-sweet mind a thought of discarding her old horsehair chairs, her ungainly rosewood

beds, her tall, grim buffets, for the last extravagance in maple and magnolia.

Is there anything more pathetic than the fate of an old mother who is forced to break up housekeeping and go to live with those who give a roof and bread in place of love?

She must say good-by ruthlessly to all her little treasures. The cup with "Remember Me" on it in fading gold, the dingy rocking chair, the old cherry press, are all weighed in the balance and found wanting. Were not these the tributes of love? Are they not dearer than gifts bought because it is the fashion to own such things?

Ah, who can put a price on the cradle in which my baby has lain—lillied all over for the grave? Is not its sweetness and its sacredness worth more to me than a royal couch at Fontainebleau?

I love those people who prefer to do always the same thing—who go each year to the same resort, consort with the same people and come home in the fall to the same home and the same dear old face of things. Once I spent an ideal summer in an English farmhouse. They were such humble folk, that Mr. and Mrs. Andrews, and yet how proud of the splendid fact that their ancestors 300 years ago had tilled the same soil and that they were worthy of their kin.

Sometimes when I look down on the poor, pinched pills of humanity, to which some of our great generals and nobles have dwindled — the shriveled, cigarette-smoking youths too feeble to resent an insult, too servile to recognize one when

offered—I am ashamed to think how far behind in loyalty we are to people like the Andrews of Clovely—who would not do anything unbecoming a gentleman and a farmer.

One night at a dinner party I heard a sweet young lady boast that we Americans are the most cosmopolitan people on earth.

I am afraid it is true. We think it greater to be of all nations than of our own. In London, if you want to compliment an American just pretend to mistake her for an Englishwoman.

What we need is more pride of insularity. I don't know but what after all the most welding process for us would be a good, vigorous war with some foreign power, strong enough to make us hump ourselves.

We need to build homes that, because our children are born there, our dear dead died there, our names are founded there, become through these refining fires too sacredly sweet to sell. The home should not in any sense be a commodity. In America every homestead is for sale—provided the owner gets his price. There is no such thing as sentiment or pride of name, or ambition to leave an heritage to be perpetuated. In the poorest shire of Europe there are huts a king cannot buy for all his monarchy.

In this country we find people who are proud of buying the old-fashioned furniture of families vanquished by Time and Fate. It is to me like using a borrowed crest. Can I point with pride to those well-worn but unfamiliar chairs filled

with gentle ghosts whose place for all our money we cannot usurp?

Dear reader, did your ever open an old yellow-leafed Bible and find in its fading pages a pressed rose, or a leaf that you knew came from some dear grave? Or perhaps it was a curl of gold—that priceless gold that once you drew along your hand while the sweet purple eyes smiled up at you?

Could any new edition outrival this old dog's-eared book? Could you be hard enough to cast it aside?

And the old love! The dear, dead, love! What was it? A hero worship? A sweet saint to whom we made all our orisons? Let us keep the pedestal flowered and the dear love shrined!

When you look back into your past, a merciful Providence blots out all the wrong and leaves only the good. In the springtime of the year gather violets, and purple over all your past with their sweet regret.

There are men who insist each year on changing homes; they pull up women by the root and crush the tendrils of family ties. There are women who think any place is better than home, and are brave for all the untried wildernesses of the greedy world.

Let us try to make our young ones love the home and its belongings, not because it may be fine, but because hearts grew there, and mother-love was lighted at its home torch. So many old things are best; old homes, old sweethearts, old

belongings, old friends. It is the honoring of these things that keeps us loyal, keeps us true.

We have all had roseleaf days of innocence and happiness. Let us wear them on our hearts like amulets encased in the precious amber of memory. Nothing new is so sweet as the old; nothing fine is so fine as the true and tested, and all the glories of Europe cannot equal the breath of a home jasmine, the dear remembered face of a black mahogany sofa in the hall that we have known and loved since memory began for us.

BABETTE.

BABETTE.

"Good mornin', Mister Mizner; how you was?"

"Hey! Good mornin', Babette; how you was yourself?"

"I say, Mister Mizner, I wish you'd come over here jist a minute, Mister Mizner. I want you for somethin'. You know what."

If anyone had been walking down that dull street that dreary morning, he would have wondered where on earth the two, thin, piping treble voices, greeting each other so kindly and so intimately, came from. That is, anyone who cared or was curious. For instance, there was a man, an artist, hurrying by with his paint box and brushes under his arm; but he was only cursing his luck that he could think of nothing to paint, and wondering amid his wicked Spanish imprecations if he should not have to take to doing signs for a living.

Well, surely this street across which the two voices knit an impalpable bridge of communication was hideous enough to set the teeth of an artist on edge. It was hopelessly common, dusty, ugly, and angular. As far as the eye could reach was a narrowing vista of pent-roofed, red-painted cottages with steep pepper-and-salt colored stoops

jam on the street. Here and there a jagged gray shed sprawled feebly over the sidewalk to shelter a barrel of oysters, a bag or two of charcoal, and a bundle or two of fat pine sticks cut up for kindling-wood. Occasionally there would be a Dago fruit shop, with limp bananas on the window sill and leprous-looking oranges solving a geometrical problem on the one grimy shelf where the cabbages and apples were; and on the corner there was a shop where Mrs. Wall sold over a shaky counter the nickel's worth of black-strap molasses, dabs of butter wiped off on the rims of cracked saucers and illegally small loaves of twist bread.

At the end of the street, where it dribbled off into the swamp beside a noisesome factory, there stood a huge, shabby, unpainted brick building. Its dull red walls seemed to be trying to brazen out the stare of the sun. Not a vine grew anywhere to give it grace, and the multitudinous rows of windows glared down like so many loveless, hard old eyes. A wretched, high, wooden fence inclosed this building — one of those hopeless, unpainted, unscalable wooden barriers, made cruelly severe by a prickly growth of broken glass along the ledge.

There was a high gate, with an iron-barred peep-hole in it, and a visitors' bell, that, when it was pulled, clanged and rumbled and howled, and then echoed a long whispering series of clangings and rumblings and howlings and echoings, of echoes fainter and farther off each time, until

all dwindled away like dead expectancy into the perennial silence of the dim corridors.

Over the doorway hung the ghost of a sign. It read, or rather it once read, "Asylum for Motherless Children." But now, so faded and bleared was it, that it looked as if charity had thought better of her sweet intention and had striven to efface its record.

Here and there the fence was broken, a strip of paneling pulled away. If the artist had stopped to look he might have had framed, in pine wood, a picture of a mangy yard with a hundred or so of the motherless children in their ragged blue clothes, cowering in the sun to keep warm, or else playing at games. Their wizen, experienced faces, the faces of the Little Children of the Wicked, for whom so many of life's saddest problems are prematurely solved, grinned gauntly with a ghost-like semblance of amusement and interest.

What an aggregation of uncomforted sorrow, of motherless misery, is represented by an hundred little children in even the best and richest of orphan asylums. True, in this one, which was far from being rich, there was warmth and shelter and food, but how could there be much mothering? Little nameless ones must go unkissed to bed, baby hands must wander aimlessly and vainly for the white snows of the mother's breast; prayers must be said in a lump; kindness dealt out in equal rations; heartaches must be kept each in their separate secret prisons. The asylum

becomes a vast mechanical incubator, and here and there under its unpliant wooden wing a little chick of a child droops and pines.

. . . . . .

It was a raw day. The wind blew, and swirls of dust rose in long cornucopias across the road. It was the day for the annual meeting, and a Lady Director, in furs and yellow feathers and a silken gown, had been walking through the building. She had been pleased to note how clean things were, as she walked through a frosty corridor where the sun never came, nor laughter ever echoed, nor joy ever sang. A lad in blue was on his knees scrubbing the floor, making its bare cleanliness cleaner. His little chafed knees wore the hieroglyphics of toil, of nail-marks, on the splinter-torn skin. These belong to the endless orisons of the poor. He moved his bucket, that the silken skirts might not reach its soapy rim. "That 's a good boy," said the Lady Director, giving him an unsolicited alms of trite words with the edges of her lips. The small face looked up uncurious. Is it being good to do that service from which we cannot get away?

There was a fire in the boardroom where the annual meeting was to be held, and its flames lit up with grimaces the practical features of the Founder who, done amateurishly in cheap gift oils looked down from the mantel-shelf. The directors gossiped gently, and praised each other for coming so far.

Sometimes, during a pause in their talk, the

sound of the lad's patient scrubbing crept in with the wind under the door. It was a dismal, cheerless sort of sound, but perhaps no one noticed it at all.

. . . . . .

Out in the yellow, mangy yard, away from the conglomerate of motherless childhood, a little lad, not yet out of pinafores and frocks, was leaning against the pine fence, standing upon tip-toe to look out through a hole upon the world. He wore the blue livery of orphanage, but it was thin and ragged. The frayed tops of his stockings hung away from his red, wind-nipped legs. He was a forlorn little fellow in truth. Times were very hard in charity-land, and there were not nearly enough feathers to go around amongst the chicks in this great barnyard. Babette—for that was the diminutive an asylum nurse had given him when, four years since, he had been left at the door swaddled in a ragged apron, a poor little leaf cast loose in a storm—Babette looked out with friendly, expectant eyes. It was a dear, wistful little face, and a round, little head, thatched with brown, wavy locks, and Babette was pretty enough for any artist to have painted, and sweet enough for any mother to have taken to the shelter of her pure bosom.

"Ain't you goin' to come pretty soon, Mister Mizner?" The child's voice was vibrant with hope deferred and patience tested to the breaking point.

"Yes; I was coming pretty quick, Babette,"

came the answer from across the way in the shoe-mender's shop. There was a scraping and a shuffling over a bare floor, and Mister Mizner stood in the door.

He was only a poor, old cobbler of worn-out shoes—a thin, ill-used, little old German fellow, living by himself—but somehow, as he stood there on his steep, pepper-and-salt colored stoop, the wind blowing through his old blouse shirt and making him seem quite fat, he looked a very kindly companion for a child like Babette. His wintry face was frosted by time, and pinched and puckered into wrinkles that were spun over it as fine as cobwebs, and a rim of silvery hair, like a band of beautiful chinchilla fur, held in place the kind old eyes, the pinched red nose, the cherry-shaped mouth, and the rosy, crab-apple chin.

Mister Mizner carried a cobbler's bench and a broken boot and a big, dirty ball of beeswax with awls stuck in it. With these he crossed the street, and planting his bench close to the fence beside Babette, began to cobble away as if out in the street with the December wind blowing on his old head was just the finest shop in the world.

"Yes, I was coming," he said, putting the old boot like a glove on his hand, and pushing his spectacles back into the frost of his scant locks. "And here I was, and here you was, too, and here we both was togedder; ain't we?"

Babette looked down from his little window and nodded and smiled. He was evidently waiting to take up a broken thread of some of yesterday's

conversation and feared to unravel the old man's thought too far.

"We was still lookin' out; was n't we, my boy," said Mizner, "lookin' and lookin' for that be-yew-tiful mudder what 's comin' from the faderland. Maybe there was a storm in them Hartz mountains and she do n't get away very quick. Maybe her shoe was broken, and the rough stones on them hills hurt her feet. Never mind. She will come some day and she will dress like the empress with a blue cloak full of stars all over to keep her warm, that be-yewtiful mudder."

"Is she everybody's mudder, Mister Mizner? Is we all her little boys in here?"

Mizner lifted his hand with its funny glove and scratched his rosy chin with the toe of the old boot. He looked up and down the street for an answer, and at Babette's eager little face.

"Well, no, Babette. She was joost your mudder, and that was all. She would n't go round in there. Them little fellows was got that big house for their mudder. She was joost for you." And old Mizner crossed himself that he might be forgiven for thus healing the hurt of the hungry little heart.

It was n't the first time the German cobbler had had to cross himself on Babette's account. From the time he first set up his small shop beside the big asylum's wall, his heart had gone out to the little lad, drooping and pining as a chick may do that is nourished under the wooden care of an incubator. It was he who made the hole in the

fence so big that all the wistful, loving baby face might be his to look upon. He took to carrying his cobbler's bench across the way to talk the better with Babette, and there, it seemed, he did his best work and got his luckiest jobs. It was he who set Babette to wondering over a beautiful mother; who explained what she was when Babette asked: "What is a mudder, Mister Mizner?" It was he who taught the child to love and long for an imaginary mother, a sweet, crowned lady who should take him in her arms and rock him to sleep. Babette had never seen a mother rocking her baby to sleep, but some fluttering instinct of his heart made him feel just how it would be.

Day after day old Mizner sat in the sun and cobbled away at the wretched shoes brought him to make as good as new, and day after day he knit into the russet-colored fabric of the child's life a golden thread of love and hope. He brought out from the dusty cupboards of his unused mind all his faded, pressed roses of memory of his own young mother, over whose gentle breast fifty generations of blue corn-flowers had blossomed and died, in the far away fatherland. He beautified her with all the tender legends of his faith; he made her half Madonna, half earthly mother, loving, merciful, beautiful, yet far away as the stars. But as the days went by they learned to believe together that Babette's mother would come to him, and that they must wait and be good.

"Will she come to-day, Mr. Mizner?"

It was the old, hungry question. Even Mizner did not comprehend how patiently the brown eyes searched up and down the ugly road; how fast the little heart beat every time the old bell clanged and howled and echoed along the quiet corridors.

There were kind nurses in the asylum, but they were too busy to mother four-year-old Babette. He was a little man now. And yet one night as he lay crowded up in his narrow iron bed, already too short for him, he looked so pretty between the coarse brown sheets — his face like a flower breaking through clods of earth, or like a young moon parting the somber skies—he looked so pretty, I say, that an old woman nurse with a sort of cocoanut face, bent over and kissed him. His arms went out to her in a flash and clasped the skinny old neck. He lifted his head from the hard couch and saw who it was he held. "Never mind," he whispered, smiling a patient, wintry little smile, "I jist thought it was my beyewtiful mudder."

Oh, hungry, childish hearts, to whom mother love comes only in dreams!

Mister Mizner sat scratching his chin with Joe Mason's boot, thinking hard. Pretty soon he got up and peeped into the yard. Then he looked up and down the street, and then he said in a low voice:

"Babette, I must tell you somethings. There was news come that on Christmas eve every good little boy can see his mudder. Maybe he could n't

stop with her all the time, but he could joost see her with his own eyes. I think you was a good little boy, and by and by I will come and take you away. We will make a little Christmas for us, too."

Not a soul was in sight. Not a cottager lounged at her door, nor a face looked out from the grim asylum windows. It only took Mizner a minute to peel away the rotted paneling and lift little Babette out in his arms, hide him in the cobbler's bench and cross the street to the shop with him. I 'm afraid his conscience did not trouble him much. He did not even cross himself for a wicked old kidnapper. "Ja," he whispered in German to himself, "I would do more than that to give Babette a Christmas gift."

Mizner placed the child on the couch, and turned to make fast the door, so the neighbors would think he had gone to buy leather. Such a bit of a shop as it was—shop, bedroom and kitchen all in one. There was a monkey stove like a red-hot little giant, almost dancing for merriment on its four legs, and there was a pot with hot sausages in it, and on the table under the window a noble gingerbread gentleman with a sword and a gilt crown, and a gold and red whirligig and a baby mug of china with a wreath of roses, and "From a friend" written on it in lovely gilt letters, and in the midst of these a Christmas tree. Not a grand affair like the warmed-over New Year's tree in the asylum

parlor, loaded with candles that must not be lighted and with a pair of socks, a handkerchief, and a pair of woolen mitts for every child; but just a thorny, sweet-smelling sprig of fir stuck up in a big red apple and tied on all its tiny branches, with red papers and candy kisses. It was not much of a tree, but it was big enough to fill those two childish heart full of stolen joy.

Just so soon as the sun went down, Mizner and Babette set forth on their strange quest. Even along that dull no-thoroughfare there were Christmas noises. Firecrackers snapped viciously like toy terriers and big torpedoes exploded with a grand crash. Off toward the city the sky was golden with fireworks, that left a radiant haze hanging like a gauze curtain beneath the tranquil stars. Old Mizner carried the child wrapped in a quilt. What a little, docile, tremulous morsel he was, so pliant and so plump, so tender and soft to the touch, and yet so small that he might have been a pair of mended boots the wicked old cobbler was carrying home. Mizner hurried on from grassy footpaths to cobble streets; past Christmas shops and gay homes where real mothers were dancing with their children. He said not a word, and the little child only burrowed deeper like a dormouse in its nest.

At last they came to a church—picked out with lights against the violet skies of night. It was a grand church, with candles on the altars, as if all the stars of Bethlehem were shining there. Beautiful voices sang—it was the ringing of human

joy bells. A perfume like a prayer seemed to breathe down over all the multitude of people.

Something cold splashed on the child's face. It was holy water. Babette sat up in Mizner's arms and clung to him in a thrill of joy.

There, right before him, high up on the marble wall, like a tall white lily on its stem, her head bent down, her tender eyes searching his, her soft arms reaching down toward him, her white bosom so sweet under its star-shot robe of blue, there was the crowned mother of his dreams, the beautiful mother of his longing heart.

Mizner pushed through the crowd and came closer to the shrine, and the child touched with his little cold hand the stiff golden broidery on the Madonna's robe. "She will not forget. Nor must thou," whispered old Mizner.

. . . . . .

Babette was fast asleep on the old cobbler's couch. He smiled in his sleep, and stretched his arms many times in the air. Had a woman been there they would have fallen like a wedding-ring of love around her neck. The cobbler sat scratching his head in a terrible perplexity. "Ja, I joost was crazy," he growled at himself. "How was I goin' to get Babette back to the asylum?"

A noise sounded on the stoop, and some one rattled the door. Mizner opened it, and there, lantern in hand, his face anxious and white, stood the superintendent.

"Mizner," he began, "we have lost little Babette. He has been —"

His eyes fell on the funny little Christmas tree, on the china mug, and the nibbled carcass of the gingerbread man, on the motherless baby boy asleep on the old shoemender's shabby couch, on shame-faced Mizner rubbing his rosy chin.

"Do n't make no fuss," said Mizner, humbly. "It was all right, we was joost havin' a little Christmas. We ain't got no mudders, Babette and me, and we was company for each other."

The superintendent smiled. He gathered Babette in his arms, and swiftly bore him home to the big asylum over the way. As he carried the child across the cold corridors he said to himself: "Poor little lad; poor little man."

Babette turned his face like a blush-rose bud up to the superintendent's. His eyes shone like dewdrops glistening in the moonlight on the petals of a rose in a garden.

"Never mind," he said. "I was n't runned away. Never mind, no more. I was jist with my be-yewtiful mudder."

ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN.

ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN.

Let me see. It must have been in the year 1896 that I began to buy my set of encyclopædias.

I say "began," because I have been at it ever since, and the dismal chances are that the sale will not be actually completed until I shall have fallen into a sightless and dull old age.

I wonder, dear reader, did you ever undertake, inspired thereto by the cajolings and blandishments of an over-enthusiastic agent, to buy anything on the installment plan? It is the fairest deception ever devised, and when I think on myself and my sad adventures into such commercial toils I immediately have before my mind's eye a vision of that picture that filled a page in a certain old edition of Tennyson, showing the rash Lady of Shalott tangled in the meshes of her own web, illustrating the lines—

> "The curse has come upon me,'
> Cried the Lady of Shalott."

We give away our hospitality; we give away our worldly goods. Sometimes ourselves, and very often our friends; but it is not often we like giving away money, and for that reason, if for no other, purchasing on the installment plan appeals to us eloquently. It, at least, has the merit of

staving off or, at least, of spreading out thin the evil days of reckoning.

I have a little, modest friend, to fortune, alas! and to fame unknown, who with her needle has been for many years trying to make the best of the bad bargain of life, and who showed me one day a beautiful cut-glass claret jug that she had bought—I beg pardon, that she is buying—on the installment plan.

I could not but look at her with an interrogation point in my eye. She flushed a little. It was so apparent that for her to own a gorgeous claret jug of cut glass was like the play of "Hamlet" with the melancholy Dane left out, since, of course, she had no claret for her jug.

"Do n't laugh," said she, pathetically humble; "but I thought I should die if I did not get that thing. It is so pretty, so tall, so slender, so white, it makes me happy. Sometimes I set it at night on the mantel shelf and open the shutter, and then walk out into the street and look in to see how it looks from the sidewalk."

Of course, I did n't laugh. Do not I often long for beautiful things that are beyond my reach — for those foolish lovelinesses that are not meant for poor folk!

Do you know sometimes I think if I were really rich I would treat myself by giving away a lot of "useless" presents. I 'd give an inkstand to a fool, a poetry book to Gradgrind, a Bible to the city council, a year's subscription to the Union Signal to a woman who sells whisky at her

corner grocery. A friend of mine once gave an order for a pair of gloves to a young girl to whom gloves of any sort are luxuries. Well, what do you suppose she bought? A pair of white undressed mousquetaires! Somehow, when I found it out, I could have cried — of understandingness! Oh, dear friend, if you are giving any presents this holiday, include among them a few useless ones. They are posies in flowerless wastes, sunshine in dungeons. Do n't give emery bags to seamstresses, inkstands to authors, and knitting needles to the old ladies in the almshouse!

But my encyclopædia! How well do I remember the night when, melted by a good hot supper of home-broiled oysters, I listened, like Pauline to Claude Melnotte, to my friend D., who told me how easy it would be for me to buy a set of books that no writer should be without. Why, I saw those books on my shelves. I saw myself becoming a regular learned pundit, knowing everything in those ponderous volumes from A to Zeus. The method of payment on the installment plan seemed absurdly easy. "We deliver you the whole set at once, and you pay for them just precisely at your own will. Why, you can pay a dollar at a time. You will never know it; and how a woman in your position can go through life without a set of encyclopædias is more than I can comprehend. Why, people would n't believe it of you."

Naturally I was conscious-stricken. I thought with remorse on the years and years I had written

articles without any encyclopædias. I seemed to see my future pages graced with such an array of information as would dazzle a College professor, and my castle in the air was filled with books bought and paid for without my knowing how.

It was a Saturday night when the set came. Now, I am not superstitious, but I have always heard that what you acquire on Saturday you will not have for long, and I know perfectly well that if you move into a house on Saturday you never stay long, so I did permit myself to wish the things had reached me a day sooner or a day later.

What pleasure we had unpacking, smelling and arranging those volumes only one who loves books can understand! Their carved-oak shelf was charming. The top of it was made for beautiful bric-a-brac, and there seemed an eternal fitness of things in placing there my quaint blue and white wedgewood jug that had come from Gad's Hill, that had belonged to Charles Dickens and been used by him every night of his life.

Every member of my family was made to admire those books, to go out of the room and come in to see how they struck one when taken unawares.

They were covered in a new brown leather, and in a very little while its unmistakable fragrance permeated all the room. Why, on that Saturday night I had the price twice over in enjoyment!

The lamps were lighted, the curtains drawn, and I sat down to read my encyclopædias.

Do you blame me that I began with A in Vol. I.? I really meant to read all the way through, and was not a bit abashed when F. recalled to me the Autocrat's story of the gentleman at a dinner party who could converse so learnedly on any subject that began with A, but was worse than stupid when the topic began with B or C, and nobody could understand it until the Autocrat happened to recollect that the first volume of the encyclopædia was just out!

Dear reader, of course you know what it is to have bills to come in to you. Is n't it one of the evilest of all evils to owe money? To have the door open, and that polite, deprecating, sympathetic collector, who knows what it is to be hard up himself, and who is proportionately sorry for you, come silently in, with his half-whispered request that you "settle that little account?"

Working people are not often dishonest, nor inclined to beat others out of money; yet why is it their small debts are the first to be pounced on, and they are made to pay up promptly, when the man or woman who owes hundreds or thousands for jewelry, laces, or carriages, can take his or her own time, and is only presented with a bill in fear and trembling that it may be repudiated altogether?

Well, the bill for those books began to come in. The first was a mere matter-of-fact affair,

and, I rejoice to say, was paid promptly. Whatever happens, it can't be said that I began by not paying for that set.

As well as I can recollect, the second, and even the third, monthly payment went all right; but after that! Well, you see my creditors were a New York firm; the money had to be sent to them on a postal order; and postal orders only to be got at a main office, along with telephones, I consider to be among the discomforts of modern life.

Every month there came to me, as regularly as the new moon floats in the sky, a flat, salmon-colored envelope, with the firm name of the sellers of that wretched encyclopædia printed on the corner. I grew to hate the color of salmon. I would n't even tolerate an expensive fresh salmon that my fish dealer tried to make me buy one Sunday.

There was a certain day in the month, about the 7th (always an unlucky day, by the way), when I was morally certain I would find on my office desk that insipid, insidious, insinuating, salmon-colored envelope from the publishing department of Dodd, Gasted & Co., containing a typewritten letter, per "P.," or "D.," or "Q.," informing me that they had already informed me that an installment of so many dollars was due on my part for a set of encyclopædias.

At first my conscience, my good heart, my sense of politeness, made me open and read those letters, and, after every one I read, I determined

solemnly to go to the postoffice "to-morrow" and send off a postal order.

Ah, that "Manana!" that "Manana!" What good acts go undone in thy name!

And, then, the patient pertinacity of those envelopes began to pall on me. They came like an undesirable guest. Often I went to my office feeling in my bones that something pleasant was going to happen, and would hastily run through my mail to find "the letter that never came." On such days it seemed to me that I invariably came across a fresh one of those old, familiar, salmon-colored, patient epistles — the very Jacobs of literature! They reminded me of that line in Arnold's "Light of Asia":

> And when I called another—
> Abra came.

Well, I had an idea of writing the firm a letter and suggesting, just as a sort of private, friendly tip, that they discard the labeled, salmon-colored envelope, and by using big, square, blue, pink, or white ones, addressed in various chirographies, delude their correspondents into opening them.

Meanwhile I read my encyclopædia in a different spirit.

To say that my conscience was easy over owing so much money would be to do myself an injustice. To the contrary, I hated to go into the room where those books were. They stared at me like Banquo's ghost. They were like Macbeth and murdered sleep.

One day I discovered that my books said Biloxi

was in Alabama. It took at least $10 off my mind, and the next month's letter I flung in the fire in a passion of outraged honor.

Since then a discrepancy, an inaccuracy, even a typographical error, is a boon. I search for them diligently, and when I find one, the harassing, aggravating burden of paying on the installment plan grows temporarily light.

After all, isn't it better to pay for things before you get them? Have you not felt the foolish waste of money in settling a bill for your dinner in a restaurant after you had eaten it? Did you ever have to pay for a coat or a gown after it was worn out and cast away?

I have a friend who once owed a bill to a tailor. The tailor lived directly between our favorite restaurant and our working place. I used often to go to dinner with W., and, as the years wore on, it became second nature for us to make a wide detour in order to avoid the innocent victim of W.'s impecuniosity.

But one day W., in a streak of luck, paid the bill. Shortly after we were on our way to dinner and we made the usual safe circuit. W. then remembered he was free, and that once again, after, lo! these many years, Chartres street was a thoroughfare for him. So we retraced our steps, and in triumph paraded past the door that had been our bane. It was, indeed, a great moment.

But those letters! Of late I have taken to reading them. If life lasts, I mean to substantially requite the publishing firm for their long

and devoted trust in one who so poorly has deserved such consideration.

One letter says: "We have to write once more in behalf of your account with the encyclopædia. Three dollars are due in October, $4 on the first of each succeeding month, which would make $19 in all. This may be a large sum for you to pay, and if you can't pay it all at once, we ask you to remit part of it at once, if you possibly can."

Poor publishers! Could anything be kinder?

The last letter "courteously begs for a remittance at your very earliest convenience."

Dear reader, the story is tragic. It is worse than the Lady of Shalott, for that was only poetry. "To-morrow" I mean to cancel that debt, and then never again shall all the wily-tongued agents in the town get me to buying things on the installment plan.

ROSES OR REGRETS.

ROSES OR REGRETS.

Love is a great magician. He comes to us in the rose-leaf time of life and unlocks all our doors, and sets them wide that the breath of heaven may have its will. And then, by and by, when everything is blown away—when all has been given, and every place is empty—he closes them all again and goes away with the keys, leaving us like an old, shabby house—dark, cobwebbed, and labeled "To let."

And yet what earthly tenement is so dear as that forlorn, deserted place that was once the palace of the king? Love was never in vain. The innocent babe that was so tenderly and rapturously caressed sleeps finally in a felon's ditch, his coverlid unmarked clay, but the dear, forgiving God remembers what mother's love hedged him in in the dead days of his innocence, and her tear-set prayers work the mystic wonder of absolution.

Even the oldest life and the evilest may hold in the meager amber of its memory one gracious recollection of love. The stranded old age wrecked hopelessly on the barren rocks of disaster, deserted and going down, had its springtime and its love-time. Listen to the garrulous bab-

blings of an old man who sits in the sunshine. They go back to his happy days, skipping all the sin, the temptations, the wrong-doing, and making of his mumbled words a faded garland of flowers sweet from the long-ago garden of his youth. This sweet memory is like a gentle caress from the old, hard fingers of Time—that, in spite of our failures and mistakes, would somehow requite us and forgive, and cover away our regrets under memories as pleasant as roses.

Perhaps among your memories is that of some dear one who is now, alas, only a gentle ghost with haunting powers of love. Time was, in the days that can come no more, when harsh, ill-considered speeches snapped between you two like the broken strings of a violin, meant and fashioned only for music's sake. And then he went away—to be gone for good—and the forgiving word was never said. But the dead harbor no harm nor unkind punishments, and our only recollections grace the grieved-for grave with the fragrance and beauty of roses. Oh, merciful magician—Love, that makes us forget the ended discord, that merges the frown and the sigh in the smile and light caress!

Each one of us, however shallow, vain, and worldly, however unbelieving, flippant, and callous, has in some secret place his sanctuary, where his holiest resolves burn like candles in the censers, where his loved ones live like saints upon the altars.

Perhaps once a year we come like spent and

disheartened pilgrims to this quiet Mecca of our hearts, and locked in there we have it out with grief. The love that went away; the happiness that passed us by; the friend we discarded for a pasteboard imitation; the trouble we caused; the unfaith we showed; the lie we told; the alms we withheld; the weak one we tempted; the staining word we said of some other,—all these aches and black regrets we spill out in a long confession more precious than sacrificial spices on our altars.

Is there anyone so content with himself that he has not his lonely hour of anguish, when he would recall, if he could, the ungenerous, the spiteful, the selfish acts of the last twelve months, and replace those weedy wastes with roses? It is so much easier, though, to regret than to do better.

Did ever any man get good out of evil intended for another?

Unkind thoughts, suspicious, ugly as breeding bats, mean stings of gossip set afloat like irresponsible thistledowns, sweeten no breath.

The unlovely heart is a wrinkle-maker that can blight the most faultless beauty.

The heart leaps instinctively at the sound of song; the fretted frown melts away under the pure caress of a baby-wave of willow-scented air that was born of the young spring,—so long as we have heartbeats the something deathless in us stirs skyward at the story of heroic acts and real, spontaneous nobility of character. These things mate with the divine that is in us.

Like a homesick bird caught in an iron cage and wearying for the free woods, the sunlight and the alluring, beckoning, unreachable blue of the sky, we bend our heads and listen anxiously for the far-off, sweet notes of the bird with the unclipped wing.

And then, tremulously, timidly, passionately, we send back from behind our bars the answering echo of that song.

Oh, heart, is your cage circumstance? is it duty? is it a dull cottage and poverty? is it the procrustean couch of the invalid? Then I pray you listen all the better, for that way freedom lies.

There are women forever elbow-deep in dishwater, but the poet's song goes deepest to their hearts; they comprehend it with the divine intuition.

I sometimes think that free birds sing sweetest when they sing for the caged, unmated ones, and the poet's song is grandest when it lightens and lessens the humblest tasks of those tired working ones tethered to inevitable routines, and sets them momentarily free.

The best part of us is that which touches some other life with loveliness, and leaves on some other heart the trace of deeds as pleasant as roses are in wintry weather.

Just so surely as a great thought is finer than the baldest fact—a mechanical calculator can establish records and statistics, a fool can preserve dates—so the simple, homely service wrought for love's sake for another, sings to the skies elo-

quently as the deed of a David, and leaves to its little audience a memory of lasting fragrance.

Not many of us, oh, waiting one, get the opportunity of the chief actor. But, after all, is it not, perhaps, easier to be great before the populace, when the applause waits its cue, when the clashing sword half-meets the ready hand, when the stage is set and the thunders roll, than to be simply strong and true and patient under the common daily stress?

There are soldiers so strategic that their mightiest murders are misnamed just victories, and there are others whose names are never called, who, like the dull brothers in the monastery, find all that is exacted for their eternal vows is the peeling of potatoes, the chopping of carrots, the lighting of the sacred altars before which the gifted singers intone the far-reaching service that is to stir the waking world.

How many patient ones are there whose dumb lives have no outlet, whose best day's highest service means only to work that another may win, only to wait that another may have, who needs must do the plodding and save the strength of the radiant, chosen ones.

The sky is powdered with stars whose meek shining whitens the night; only it is our fault that when we look up we regard this or that constellation, and forget the general beauty that bends above.

Each day some unfamed one falls out of the rank and file; some quiet, working one, whose

sayings and doings were unrecorded by the world. It was just a life of mending and cooking, and patching and saving, a sordid, scrimping round of uninspired, dull duties. And now the gnarled and grimy hands lie folded for the long, long rest. No trumpets mourn nor palms trail their melancholy fronds of green. Yet if only earth could testify—if the lives made smooth by all that ignoble labor spoke forth in flowers, upon that poor, worn-out heart that beat so long alone, would lie a pall of roses whose petals would flush the twilight skies of grief.

As the years go by we are heaping for our solace or our sorrow—roses or regrets. No knife-cut in the mortal flesh hurts so sorely as the consciousness that we have missed our chance to be kind; that we have been false where we might have been true; unfaithful where loyalty would have been so sweet; little and petty and mean where we might have graced our year and our day with an act that was large and wise and tolerant.

None of us can keep back the essence and the spirit of our natures. We must each give of that which we have—give even to our own selves. The homeliest act of daily toil may be like a damask rose, whose leaves are like sweet, pink carrier pigeons freighted with cheerful messages for those who need them most.

PERFUMES OF PLACES.

PERFUMES OF PLACES.

I think every one has, at one time or another, known what it is to be pursued by a quotation. Sometimes it is a good, long, heavy sentence or verse that beats into the brain with a mechanical precision that makes you time your footsteps to its rhythm, that goes to bed with you and gets up with you, and, in fact, owns you. Oftener it is an elusive fragment, a mere phantom that evades materialization, but still elects to keep company with you until you are justified in considering yourself haunted.

A gentle friend of mine told me one day that for weeks she had been saying involuntarily to herself every night as she lay upon her bed—

O that we were lying under the churchyard sod.

And I remember very well how I was haunted one winter by a Shakespearean fragment, of which all I could say or see was—

. . . Must,
Like chimney-sweeps, all come to dust.

For the past week the haunt that walks my world with me as I go like a shuttle betwixt my attic and the office has been:

You may break, you may shatter the vase if you will,
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.

Now I have not an idea that this pursuing ghost of a dead poet's sweet thought is properly clothed. It is only the phantom of a quotation called up by the breath of violets and daffodils that lie piled on the little florist's table right in the heart of the gay, frequented thoroughfare of Canal street.

There are memories that are like perfumes—memories of pure love, of bridals, of motherhood, of solemn consecrations, and there are perfumes that are memories, aërial bridges of sighs, by which we cross back, all invisible, into sweet, dead pasts, gray with the ashes of roses.

Who that has read it can forget how the gentle professor of all our tea tables wrote of so simple a thing as pennyroyal. The smell of it made him a boy again, and took him back to his Aunt Dorothy and the home farm-house, to the big attic where herbs hung in faded bunches along the rafters and time-warped, red wood walls. Just to crush a sprig of pungent pennyroyal in the fingers brought all that old, simple, country life of childhood back to the gray poet, professor, and autocrat.

It is so with all of us. There must always be perfumes and sweet scents that can recall for us, as nothing else may do, certain persons and certain places. The poet's verse is true; the perfume that once filled it hangs about the shattered vase—teaching that the old life is not dead; that the old ways, however mossy and untrodden, still invite the heart; that the loveliness and

charm of the old friend is still sweet for us in memory.

I am sure I am not the only one to whom the perfume of those bloomy banks of daffodils sweetening the breath of the broad street of the town is associated with memories of childhood. The perfume, pure and delicate, calls like a voice, and it tells familiar tales of a tangled, old-fashioned garden, where blue-bottles blow along the uneven walks and jonquils break the crust to loose the leaping Spring. Again we hear the young birds in the lilacs, the crooning of bees among the white and pink snows of the orchard, the patient plashing of the churn in the cool stone cellar, the jangle of bells as the dappled cows come cropping home across the fields of clover in the smoky, dewy quiet of late afternoon.

There are peculiar people who are always to be known by the perfumes they use. A century ago an empress of the French placed musk in the tapestried walls of her favorite sitting-room. The imperial mistress of the palace is dead and turned to clay, but in the room which once her presence graced, as a flower does a precious vase, the perfume of her choice lingers like a ghost of her.

Nothing can be better than the sweetness that belongs to a sweet baby. Its breath is like clover, the fragrance of its pure, undefiled little body—the chalice of a spotless soul—is sweet and rare. I have seen a man with the vile gases of a foul, gin-laden breath in his mouth bend to

touch with a kiss the pure mouth of an innocent child. It seemed, and it was, desecration.

There are men and young boys whose presence is always announced by the stale, sick smells of vile cigarettes. And these go with them into lavender-scented homes of purity, and the cigarette fumes mingle with the delicious aroma that seems to hang about young sweetheart girls who are standing where childhood and womanhood meet.

The perfume that belongs to a sweet woman is lovingly remembered by those to whom she is dear. Perhaps it is violet she wears; then the mere breath of the purple censers fastened on a florist's stall recalls her face, her dear voice, or something of her gentle ways.

In Sardou's charming play, called "Diplomacy," a great crime of robbery has been committed, and the victims are at a loss to discover who can have rifled the dispatch-box. At length one who knows the evil woman well picks up some papers that were left in the box, smells them, looks about thinkingly for a moment, and then in a flash of remembrance cries "Zeika!" The criminal has left the intangible presence of the peculiar perfume she always uses upon everything she has touched. It is the trail of the serpent.

You cannot successfully sweeten unsweetness with an extract. Cloves on a man's breath give him away as he crawls and climbs over ladies' dresses in the theater. The next morning's

sulphurous breath of a man who has had too much champagne suggests orgies, a weak nature, a self-degradation, a falling-down from high places, to the pure-hearted wife or mother whom he offers to kiss and by whom he expects to be forgiven.

Watch a woman in love slyly slip a silver-coated cachou between her teeth. I 'll wager my new bonnet she is expecting, or at least hoping, to kiss somebody. Bless her heart! As if she needed it! Is not the orris root aroma of her pretty, glinting head sweetness enough? Is not the delicate wild-flower perfume that seems to cling even to her glove, sweetness enough? It is an unartificial sweetness, too, like that of a country garden. It is part of her pure life, her pure thoughts, her wholesome, exquisite cleanliness, and is not to be bought in an apothecary's shop.

We remember how Othello kissed Desdemona. He was rough—a storm. She was like a lily, and the sweetness of one clung to her as the perfume of a white flower unfolding its petals breathes up to the sun and the sweet sky. Othello cried, as he hung over this lily-woman—"O balmy breath, I'll taste it on the tree" before he killed her that another might not love her. Crazy people exhale a subtle perfume, and who does not recall the flat, lifeless air of a sick-room. Most good readers and bibliomaniacs delight in the smell of new books. And in truth it is inviting; a faintly tarry odor that breathes out from the freshly-cut pages. It makes one think of that castle in Spain, with its sumptuous library walled with books; of long

evenings by the fire, and times for thinking and for study. Even in the streets of a great city the smell of coffee parching has a homely suggestion; it makes one think of supper time. Not a midnight supper with veal chicken salad and tough patés and sickly punch served by waiters got in for the job, but a cozy home with a young husband and a young wife and a dainty, sweet-smelling baby that belongs to them both; a round table with flowers on it, and hot biscuit with honey, and cups of coffee with yellow cream in it.

In the Spring, when the gypsy blood begins to riot in the veins; when all the old, unquelled vagabond instincts are pulling at the tether, it is good, if you can do no more, just to get down to the wharves and smell the ships. The odor of tar and bilge water, of oil, and of the salt sea-soaked sails, will make you feel as if you were going away. Why, I want no better souvenir of ocean travel than just to pass a ship-chandler's store, where the ship-smells immediately make me seasick.

A salt-frosted ribbon of brownish-green sea-weed—the best barometer that ever grew—will give forth for years the tang and zest and smell of the ocean. It will set you sailing away on a limitless sea, with the crash of waves breaking against the good ship; with the blue wilderness of water everywhere, and a soft sky, swept clean of clouds, save here and there the white brushes of "mare's tails."

That beautiful-hearted old missionary, Father Roquette, used to lodge, when he came in from his wilderness, in the archbishop's palace in Chartres street. He had hung all his dingy room like Holmes's attic, with bunches of wild-wood herbs. There were rue and sassafras, wild thyme and sage, and sweet-scented bay, and their woodsy perfumes reminded the poet-priest of his far forests. Such perfumes are not of the town, and across their aërial bridge the old missionary's spirit crossed back beyond the bayous to his Indian camps in St. Tammany.

What a pure life and cleanliness is suggested by the smell of rain. It makes one think of broad paddocks where colts are at play; of traveling in a close carriage through a pine forest in April weather; of that old Fourth Reader poem in the dog-eared yellow book we studied at the country school-house, that was set in a lilied valley, and which began:

> When the humid storm-clouds gather
> Over all the starry spheres,
> And the melancholy darkness
> Gently weeps in rainy tears.

The perfume of tuberoses, how sad it is! It carries us back to a dim room through whose sad dusks we see a shrouded form, a still, pale face and tired hands folded on a breast whose

> Long disquiet's merged in rest.

The sandal-wood sweetness of incense belongs to the church. Wherever it floats it seems to hang in the air like the visible spirit of prayer.

It wreathes memory-pictures of tender Madonna faces, the thorn-crowned head of Christ. It is tuned to the music of the "Kyrie Eleison." It belongs to the stately cathedral, and makes us remember the mass and the ritual.

Last night, from thinking on this subject I dare say, I dreamed I had a letter from England written in the white blossoms of the hawthorn. Somehow the perfume of that dream-letter that never came hangs round me still. Again I see the gorse-clad moors of hilly Devon, the country lanes with foot-notes of the Spring, and spelled out in blue forget-me-nots and pale, prim-eyed primroses. On either side the path are the fences of mounded earth, milk-white, and sweeter than spices with the bloom of the hawthorn. The memory of that perfume leads me back to a thatched cottage, to the music of a thrush singing in the sun in its wicker cage, to the full-throated church-bells calling across the moors the hour for the Sunday service.

Once, while I was ill in a far-off, alien land, a bright young writer sent me, in a letter, a bit of star jasmine from home. The faint, sweet smell of that jasmine flower breathed out for me in that German hotel. It was a remembrance of the sunny old city clasped in the arm of the river. It told a message of the dear home town. It painted a picture of peaceful balconied homes and old rose gardens pearled with dew. It photographed anew the unforgotten faces of dear remembered friends. Wherever one of us may be, the perfume

of a damask rose may fetch us a message and a memory of home. However sad the heart, a bit of scented jasmine flower will come to us like a dove with an olive branch in proof of the sweet security and peace we may find in the shelter of home in our perfumed south.

THE LADIES OF ROSEMARY.

THE LADIES OF ROSEMARY.

If ever a house fitted its owners, or if ever the owners fitted their house, that house was "Rosemary," and those owners were the Misses Fitz. It would, in fact, be difficult to say which had imparted the original individuality, although some inconsequential critic had once been heard to say that Miss Euphemia Fitz was just the dead image of "Rosemary."

In that case, Miss Euphemia must have been the tidiest, best scrubbed, and most shiningly bright lady in all the land. You had only to look at "Rosemary" to know that it must be the sanctuary of ladies who had considered it wisest not to adventure into the state of matrimony. Really, they had lived so long folded away in the sweet lavender of spinsterhood that—I blush to say it—that they were more than half disapproved of matrimony as not exactly proper.

But "Rosemary!" Rosemary was what is known as a Creole house—that is, with a great many pleasant front rooms, looking out on the sunny, low-ceiled front porch, whose gray, pent roof was pulled down somewhat like a sleepy eyelid, giving the house a curious and attractive resemblance to an old tabby cat, blinking and

winking in the sun. There was no front hall, and as each front room had its own front double-doors, whose upper halves were cut up into a multitude of little panes of rather green glass, it would have been difficult to tell which was the front door had it not been for the yellow silk curtains. There was a trim little fence and a trim little garden-walk, bordered with white sand and cockle-shells, and a great lot of trim little bushes of shiny-leaved petisporum, and another great lot of rose bushes that seemed never to be without roses. Whenever I stopped to sniff at the roses in that little bit of a garden, surging like a green sea freighted with pink seashells about the ankles of Rosemary, I concluded over again that flowers will always blow their sweetest for childless women. Their perfume breathes through the lonely rooms and seems to sweeten the stillness where no child's voice is heard.

"Rosemary" sat up a trifle in the air, and was reached by a few spidery steps, the house resting apparently on a white trellis delicately tendriled here and there with cypress vines. "I put the vines there," Miss Susan once confided to me, "because I have had, ever since I could remember, a dreadful impression that 'Rosemary, looks like a lady in a gray silk gown, who is holding it up a trifle too high and exposing her white stockings."

Dear Miss Susan! What would you say, I wonder, to some ladies I know, who are not of wood, nor sawdust either, but who impress old

fogies with the dreadful notion that their gowns are falling off them? And would you not come, with your innocent patches of flowers and ferns, to hide the breaches fashion has made?

Behind the front rooms there were a great many other rooms, all connecting with each other by means of folding doors, making you feel in whichever one you sat that presently they would all open up into each other, disclosing to you, poor, little frivolous culmination of *fin de siècle*, some stately festivities, the ancestresses of the Misses Fitz performing minuets with gentlemen who looked like George Washington and the Marquis La Fayette.

I always wanted to know if Miss Susan were not afraid to go with her lighted candle at night through those silent rooms. Now, in the parlor who might not have fancied the long, carved, brass-nailed sofa for a huge black coffin pushed against the wall to make room for the flitting ghosts; or, perhaps, as she saw it, it was the sofa still, with the slender figure of her young mother lying there, dimly shrouded in a white silk gown, and with her dead hands clasping stalks of tuberoses close to her dead breast. And those frayed and faded yellow silk and satin tapestries and brocades, so grandly looped away from the glass doors, trailing far upon the floor! What was to prevent Miss Susan frightening herself to death with the idea that they were the ghosts of some Pompadour dames who might beckon her with long, white hands. Why, if I had been Miss

Susan I should have been afraid of myself reflected in those long mirrors set across the mantel shelves cut into three by carved bands of faded gilding. I should have thought the little gray lady in the silvery challie gown, with a little gray shawl on her thin shoulders, and a flickering candle in one hand, its flame shaded by the other, was surely following me. You see, time had breathed gently on those old gilt-bound mirrors. One looked in them as through a faint fog. It would be easy to be frightened of your own self mimicking and watching all you did.

Dear me! dearie me! It is pleasant to write of "Rosemary," just as I have liked to walk in its cinnamon-scented rose-garden, pulling "bleeding heart" and carnations and lemon verbena, and bunching them all in with a hedge of nutmeg geraniums!

I am almost minded to go on describing and gossiping about these obsolete ladies inserted by some accident of fate in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. I love to tell of their ways, of how they tiptoed at night through the silent rooms, the candle-light falling on the spidery-legged mahogany furniture, making there little red moons of radiance; of how they unfolded and shook the old, soft linen sheets and blew in them before they put them away with chips of verbena folded in them; of the way they delicately brushed off, with a damp rag, the hems of their shot silk gowns when they came home from an exhibition or a wedding; of the way they sur-

reptitiously recovered for use again the tiny, glazed visiting-cards upon which, with many a Spencerian flourish, some dead and gone scribe had years ago indited "Miss Fitz, Miss Susan Fitz." If they had only been teacups—these two delicate-minded, delicate-mannered ladies—two daintily-sprigged and flowered china teacups left over from old colonial days, they would have had the place of honor in their own cabinet. But, alas, they were just two old-fashioned, sweet women, whose ideas of a party were girls in tulle gowns and a supper of chicken salad, calf's foot jelly and whipped cream, and whose idea of a lady was a gentle, soft-voiced creature, modest as the violet and as sweet and unassuming.

But it is the story of the Misses Fitz I must tell—of the Misses Fitz of "Rosemary." I somehow think I have been saving this for a long time for a Christmas story, for it is then, of all other times, that God sweetens our hearts and inclines us to be glad over others' joys and tender over others' sorrows.

I ought not to mind beginning by saying that with all their beautiful house, full of silver and crystal, or at least what they considered full, and with a grandfather's clock, and the spindle-legged chairs and cherry beds, hand-carved, the Misses Fitz were starving poor. "We can't eat wood and we can't eat brass and iron," Miss Euphemia had said on one occasion, and I do verily believe those two loyal women would as soon have thought of slicing up the grand old

horsehair sofa and serving it out in sandwiches like wedges of blood-pudding, as of selling it, and eating butter and bacon bought with its money. Yet, all day long these poor ladies were busy, each in her room; Miss Euphemia sewing away, sturdily and viciously, making calico dresses and aprons, and even overalls and jeans trousers, and Miss Susan stitching away, in a dainty, finicky fashion, on muslin bows, full of imitation lace, and coarse straw hats, that somehow she trimmed until they reminded her of the pear-tree in spring that blossomed under the kitchen window, and which kept her quoting over and over to herself, in a foolish way, that would have disgusted Miss Euphemia—

> She tied her bonnet-strings under her chin,
> And she tied a young man's heart within.

It makes me afraid even yet to imagine how Miss Euphemia would have gone on at that. "Trimming four-bit hats to sell to the darkies on your own father's plantation, and slobbering love rhymes on them!" is what I fear she would have snorted out, for Miss Euphemia's saving grace was n't gentleness. Oh, dear no!

It was even so! They say you must tell the truth to shame the devil; which implies, I suppose, that as that gentleman assumes all the other virtues this is the only method by which he can be reduced to his proper character.

Well, the Misses Fitz kept a store! Not a neat, little, popular establishment in one of the lavender-scented front rooms of sweet old "Rose-

mary," that had its gentle ghosts of dead loves and dead happiness and dead grandeur peopling every apartment, but a sly, anonymous, peripatetic little shop that went around the plantations at grinding-time hung in bundles and bags over the loyal heart and large person of Miss Juley Robinson, whom no writ of eviction served on her young ladies at the close of the War had sufficed to alienate.

It was a bitter pill these proud, delicate women had to swallow when starvation had stared them in the face, and Juley had come with her practical plan for making and selling clothing to those who had once been their father's slaves. But that father had, after all, bequeathed a fine, gallant courage, and that which they had to do they did the best they could.

How covertly Miss Juley Robinson executed her commissions only the ladies of "Rosemary" knew. No one guessed that the beautifully built hats, a trifle too refined to exactly suit the color-loving tastes of the eventual owners, had been composed, like poems, in the sweet seclusion of Miss Susan's quaint and quiet room, or that Miss Euphemia's bony fingers had thumped at the jeans overalls. Once, to clinch matters, when Miss Juley appeared at the love feast in a quite splendiferous hat, she announced generally to whom it might concern, that her young madams had bought it for her from some poor sewing woman whom they were in the habit of helping along.

"My madams is jist as good and gen'ous as when dey lived on de plantation and owned all you niggers," continued Miss Juley, in a step-on-the-tail-of-my-coat tone of voice.

But at "Rosemary" it did go against the grain a little. One day Miss Euphemia caught herself admiringly patting the flounces of a gorgeous petticoat that was growing under her hand. "Oh, I am low down. I am low down," she told herself, and as at that moment Miss Susan, with a lovely sea-shell glow in her soft cheeks, rushed in like a little pink-and-pearl lady out of a fairy tale with one of the loves of a bonnet, on her head—yes, actually on her head—why, I am blessed if wiry Miss Phemie did n't faint away right then and there.

The time had come to regulate affairs; duty was one thing, but interest and admiration were quite another, and poor Miss Susan crept back to her room looking very sad and forlorn under the obnoxious bonnet which she had forgotten to remove.

Now, the evening on which this story really opens, the Misses Fitz sat in their parlor. It was their custom to sit there every evening for an hour or so quite as if company had come in, gently chatting in a ceremonious fashion of real company topics. It was a lovely evening late in December, and the air was sweet with the perfume of a few feathery tufts of sweet olive and a few purple heads of violets that Miss Susan had arranged in a shallow saucer on the center-table.

A few wisps of wood were airily burning on the hearth, fluttering and curling and spreading their pale flames out thin as if they quite understood what was expected of them by the Misses Fitz. The firelight cast wavering, dark shadows over the long room, going here and there like the ghosts of restless children from center-table to sofa, touching the tall vases on the cabinet or laying slim, dusky fingers on the grim faces of the old, forgotten volumes prisoned away from the outer world in the bookcase in the corner.

But something unusual was the matter at "Rosemary." Miss Susan, in a great flutter of excitement, stood by one of the glass doors, half enveloped in its gorgeous yellow brocades that mingled in with the silvery folds of her gray gown, meshing its fabric with splendid color. Her small, sweet face, with its delicate chin, was turned with a lovely oval profile to Miss Euphemia. Her gray and gold hair was pushed back in soft masses from a brow that time had delicately etched here and there. Her gray eyes had a burnished look in them, all her long years' unanswered prayers seemed shining there. The yellow brocade spread away like a fine gown, and, as the Judge looked at her, she seemed even prettier than when a girl she danced "Sir Roger de Coverley" with him through the long rooms of "Rosemary."

Opposite on the sofa Miss Euphemia sat upright. A tear hung, like a dew-drop on the peak of her nose. It quivered there like a diamond in

a lady's ear, and pertinacious, as if loath to lose so fine a setting. Miss Euphemia both saw and felt this humiliating exhibition of un-Fitz-like weakness and, as she regarded it, the visual effort imparted a curious, cross-eyed, sinister expression that really did her honest countenance an injustice. Miss Euphemia also wore a grey gown, but it was a leaden, sulky, shade—the grey that one instinctively spells with an "e," and quite different in its suggestions from Miss Susan's silvery and more frivolous garb. Who shall say that words have not color? I know a man, a physician, living not a thousand miles from "Rosemary," who declares the word "the" looks gray to him, and "but" is an uncompromising black.

A conflict was on at "Rosemary." The old, familiar battle waged in many homes between invincible pride and necessity, or a healthy hunger for the events of an ordinary progressive life.

"Teach 'em! Never! never! never! Not if you talked till the crack of doom. I 'd die first! I 'd burn! I 'd sell 'Rosemary' first!" And Miss Phemie sat up like an old soldier listening to reveille, or like an elderly tragedy queen asked to play first old woman.

"But Phemie." And Miss Susan's voice was so silvery sweet one might almost have thought it was the marble and gold clock on the mantel shelf beginning to strike, "It 's only to be right here at home, only Juley Robinson's children, little Mary and Octavia and Alice and Jim and

Dan and Charlie, only Lizette's young ones and Clara's niece and Uncle Tolliver's boys and Lucy's sisters. Why, when we owned their mothers we were n't ashamed to teach them."

"Susan Fitz, you 're a fool!" exclaimed Miss Euphemia.

"I would not say that, Miss Fitz, if I were you. Really I think the case does n't warrant it," put in the Judge mildly.

"If we do n't teach 'em, what are we going to do? Starve, or fry the old sofa and make waffles out of the silk curtains?" said Miss Susan desperately. "Judge, for five years—ever since the bank failed and the mortgage was foreclosed —we have been sewing things and making hats, which an old servant—God bless her—sold for us. We made enough to keep body and soul together. But the trade has fallen off; we do n't sell anything. We have no money. We have nothing. Speak to her, Judge"; and Miss Susan wrung her hands and retreated into the yellow silk curtains, sobbing as if her heart would break.

The Judge was a rich man. He lived on a beautiful plantation; he was a great lawyer, and he was the president of the school board, but he trembled as he turned to the irate, storm-shaken lady.

"Madam,"—the Judge always called all ladies madam—"I have already stated the case. Here is an offer to Miss Susan, universally beloved and honored, as is the other lady of 'Rosemary,' to

teach one of our district schools. The compensation is thirty dollars a month. Provided the lady will entertain—ah, um—educate the children under her own roof, where there are many superfluous rooms, I am empowered to add ten dollars more for payment of school-house rent. If, as things, as Miss Susan rather suggests, have not been so—so flowery and so—so happily abundant at 'Rosemary' as its friends would be delighted—delighted, madam, to have them, it does seem a direct snub to Providence to refuse this offer—a snub unworthy of you, Miss Euphemia, and of which you ought to be ashamed, along with calling Susan a fool."

The poor Judge was all tangled up—his dignified sentences had degenerated to an irascible incoherence, and as Miss Fitz made no response, he fled the house with a pitying, backward glance at the fair gray and gold outline of Miss Susan, pressed as closely as possible to the window curtains.

I wonder is anything more sad, or in its way more fine, than the patient, dumb bravery with which the poor accept the inevitable? A rich woman, who knows nothing of want, will tell you she could not walk five miles to save her life, or stand an hour on her feet, but when the time comes, and her body is the slender, staying power between her dear ones and want, how nobly she trudges to her task, how bravely she keeps to her feet from eight in the morning until six at night, how calmly she endures cold, and

what endless patience is hers to bear what God has sent of sorrow, privation, and pain.

And so poverty prevailed. The need of bread honestly earned was stronger than the pride of a proud name.

A room—one of those beautiful, rose-scented rooms—was fitted up as a schoolroom, and one Monday morning, with an ache at her heart, and a bitter repulsion there that none would have guessed from the smile on her gentle face, Miss Susan walked in and took possession of the schoolmistress' desk.

As for Miss Euphemia, she was not to be seen, but the brass andirons and the mahogany sideboard, if they had had voices, could have told how, in the dawning light, a queer shape in a queer bed-gown had slipped in stealthily and turned to the wall the stern, patrician faces of all the dead and gone ancestors of the house of Fitz. Poor Miss Phemie! Is there any one so unfettered, so unscarred by time and fate he cannot feel something of what she suffered?

But time wore away and the school prospered, and the forty dollars a month coming in in crisp, new bills, worked a sort of revolution at "Rosemary." Often and often Miss Juley Robinson and Uncle Tolliver would tiptoe to the schoolroom door, and look in with ineffable pride on what they saw—that little gray and gold lady, like a fairy god-mother sitting among her Brownies!

"Jes' to think of my young madam a-spellin' the alferbet to them sassy niggers," Miss Juley

would say, but looking mightily pleased all the while, and as for Uncle Tolliver, to whom the alferbet was a sort of

> **A primrose on the river's brim**
> **A yellow primrose was to him,**
> **And it was nothing more.**

Why he would take his "society" silk hat off his grizzled head, and, looking in at sweet Susan Fitz, would say, deep down in his throat, "Gord bless her. Amen."

I do n't like to gossip about Miss Euphemia, but the fact is, she was that sort of a lady who could n't keep her finger long out of anybody's pie. It began at recess, when she took to making the children play sensibly and not drown the neighborhood with their noise. It spread to their arrival hour at nine in the morning, when every mother's son of them had to pass along the kitchen porch and be inspected before they were let tiptoe into that wonderful room where all the pictures hung with their faces to the wall.

I do n't suppose since the Emancipation there was ever such a subdued, sedate and well-corrected a lot of young ones.

It ended in the appearance of Miss Euphemia in the schoolroom to supervise the lessons, and woe then to the luckless culprit who reckoned that c-a-t spelled dog! "It 's my school and I think you might let me manage it as I please," ventured Miss Susan one day. "And it 's my tongue and I 'll express my own opinions with

it," said Miss Euphemia, tartly, yanking Mary and Alice and Octavia out of the room to be corrected by a method of punishment all her own. In the yard, under the gray eaves of "Rosemary," where tangled vines of wisteria patched all the leaks and offered free tenements to all the birds, there stood three barrels, and when there were flagrant offenses committed in the schoolroom it became Miss Euphemia's custom to deposit a small offender in each barrel, leaving them there until they were regenerated. I think the day Miss Juley Robinson came around the corner of the house with the wash and saw her three youngest offsprings thus detained, Mary's neat little string-tied black head bobbing in one barrel, Alice's in a second, and Octavia's in the third, she nearly made herself ill with laughing. "Hit takes an ole maid for thinking up ways of gittin' even with other folk's brats," Miss Juley confided to me when she saw me.

And the Judge—well the Judge was mightily proud of that school. He said every school had to have a name, and that the name of that school was "The Subjugation of Miss Euphemia." For my part, I think a very good name would have been "The Subjugation of Judge Yance."

For it really dated from that December night when he saw Miss Susan standing half wrapped in the gold brocade curtain, with her sweet face all aflame, as she pleaded to do that which made her, in the Judge's eyes, the bravest woman in all the land.

Are you surprised to hear that at the end of December the schoolmistress permanently resigned in favor of Miss Euphemia? And there came a night, just before the New Year with his strong young arms had pushed open the door of time and made his best bow to the audience of the world, there came a time, I say, when all the folding doors of "Rosemary" were set wide open and the proud, pictured faces of all the Fitzes looked down on gay ladies and gallant men; when the furniture shone like red moons and the air was sweet with the breath of sweet olive, and the gorgeous gold curtains swept on the floor apparently grander than ever.

And out in the dining-room there was set forth such a table. It was "half a mile long," Miss Juley Robinson said. Down the middle were two rows of cakes, a fruit cake and a pound cake and a marble cake and a sponge cake and a cocoanut cake and a spice cake and a jelly cake, and then all these over again. And all had home-made icing on them nearly two inches thick. And on each corner was a huge blue Dutch-ware bowl full of chicken salad, and that also was home-made. And on each end was a pyramid of cut-glass tumblers, half full of calves'-foot jelly, and piled high with whipped cream. And, in the middle was an epergne of the sweetest flowers "Rosemary" ever yielded. And there were champagne glasses everywhere, and piles of plates, and dainty sandwiches, and a lot of candies, wrapped in curly paper, called kisses.

By and by the company all trooped out smiling, and oh, so gay, and the gentlemen put the chicken salad on the white and gold plates, with a sandwich and a fork and a napkin, and the ladies all stood around like a fringe of flowers—some full bloom, some in bud, and some faded, but all sweet—waiting to be helped. And what a popping of corks there was, and then Miss Phemie put a big knife in the bride's hand and pushed her up to the table to cut the bride's cake. And she blushed and trembled so that a petal of the orange blossom fastened at her throat loosened and fell on the laces of her silver-gray silk gown. And then the Judge took her hand, and, before all that smiling company, kissed it for a brave, true, tender, little wage-worker; and he said he now wished to drink the first toast to his wife, to the little schoolmistress who would hereafter have only one pupil, and he prayed she might teach him her own sweet patience and tenderness and toleration and give him some of her own courage to dare to do that which her pure soul told her was right. And when the Judge had said this there was not a dry eye in all the room, and silence dwelt there for a moment as the bride thanked him with her pretty smile.

Out by the door stood Uncle Tolliver, got up in his very best suit of clothes—his burial suit he explained to Miss Juley. Uncle Tolliver looked across the jelly and whipped cream to where the bride stood, just the same sweet, little gray and

gold lady of the schoolroom, and something filled up in Uncle Tolliver's throat, and his voice was deeper than ever as he called out so that all might hear his testimony, "Gord bless her! Amen!"

FOR RENT: A THREE-ROOM COTTAGE.

FOR RENT: A THREE-ROOM COTTAGE.

For several weeks I have had my eye on a small cottage labeled "For Rent."

It is situated upon an ultra-fashionable thoroughfare, with big-wig houses all about it. It is so small and modestly unassuming that it looks inserted by mistake in such surroundings.

Having had some experience at house and home hunting, my practiced eye soon estimated that the cottage contained three rooms. I began to furnish it and to people it. There should be a parlor, a bed-room, and a kitchen, and the young married pair who were to live in it, according to my plan, should also use their neat and cosy little kitchen for a dining-room.

I could see very well the charming rooms so daintily furnished with pretty and cheap sixteenth century furniture; the goodly fellowship of authors holding down the modest shelves, the pretty wedding presents giving a proper embellishment; the shining kitchen, with its new tins, its cupboards and delft ware, the homely table set out with two teacups on the tray, and two plates on the coarse, clean cloth.

But, somehow my occupants failed to materi-

alize. I ran my mental eye over all the lists of eligible young men and marriageable young women I know, who ought to be mating and setting up houses of their own, but I could find none modest-minded enough to begin life together in so small a way as a three-roomed cottage that can be hired for nine dollars a month.

Once on a time young women—even the daughters of rich and aristocratic families—were not ashamed to marry for love and set up housekeeping with no other capital than the young husband's sturdy arms and the young wife's willing hands and cheerful determination to make the best of things, and get on in the world. But fathers and mothers have changed in these days. They have evoluted clean away from cottages and a dining-room and kitchen combined existence.

The poor young man who is good for seventy-five dollars a month and for untold pluck, sobriety, and perseverance has no show with the poor young girl who is being educated to marry for a living, and who honors a young man visitor according to the style of his clothes and the value of his scarf-pin.

It is in a spirit of sincere, downright commiseration that a girl nowadays listens to her mother's pretty little love story of her courtship, wedding, and early married life. She is as ashamed as she is sorry to think there was a time when her mother carried a basket on one hip and a baby on the other—when she washed her own parlor windows and cooked her own dinner.

Nowadays the daughter must begin where the mother leaves off. This is social progress. This is the result of our firmly established aristocracy of dollars. The whole fabric of society is cursed with the worship of money inherited, not money earned.

The poorest match for a girl that I can think of is a young man who has been nothing but a peg on which some dying uncle or father has hung the fabulous riches that could n't be taken into the grave.

Ten years' steady dray-driving for the same firm beats a record of tandem turnouts and tally-ho turnovers all to pieces.

But I can find no young ladies, and but few parents, to agree with me, except in that safe, remote way—the abstract.

Sometimes I wonder if any of us are doing anything to foster and preserve individuality. To be as like as two peas with our rich neighbor seems to be the highest ambition. Once we were genuinely proud of our beautiful old plantation houses, our ideal southern homes with their air of hospitality expressed in wide halls, big rooms, and broad galleries. But all that pride is gone now, and almost any day you can see some such home being chopped up, cut bias, ruffled, and tied back into a prevailing style that is fashionable in Higginsville because it is fashionable in New York; and that is fashionable in New York because my Lady Thingumabob has built one like it in the Isle of Wight. For that which was

nobly suitable to our climate, our customs, and the hearts of us, we have exchanged a conglomerate confusion of timber and shingles, indigenous to any soil, and the commonplace inspiration of a commonplace mind. But, this is more social progress. Happiness, honor, progress, getting-on in the world, consists in attaining the biggest house, the most exclusive visiting list, in giving the swellest reception, in making the greatest stir.

I break my heart because I cannot paint my house. Why? Because it is the old home with tender memories, like the perfume of lavender in all the rooms, with gentle ghosts of dead loves, and ended lives peopling the twilight shadows of recollection and regret? Because I want to do all I can to preserve this faded husk, once so rich in golden grain? Oh, no! But because my neighbors have capped the climax of their social progress with a chameleon-hued roof, and I must keep up with my neighbors in those affairs of style that appeal to the pocket.

A very good sign of good blood is a natural tendency to honor every occasion and every condition with our best manner, our highest thinking, our manliest behavior. That was the old way.

The new way does n't encourage the gentleman to be a blacksmith, or the blacksmith to be a gentleman. We laugh at the exploded creed of the old poet, who believed that he

> Who sweeps a room as to God's laws,
> Makes that and the action fine.

The sentiment that animates society naturally makes the private opinion of our daughters and our sons. We laugh and admire the heroism of the young girl who bravely declares that she will marry the man she loves, if she has not a cent in the world and he is covered with gold.

When the average girl marries she insists on a white satin wedding dress and a lot of flummery. She ought to have it. There is no harm in her desiring it, or in her having it, but there is an awful prophecy of harm in the fact that she is ashamed not to have these things.

Once upon a time I knew a young girl who received as a wedding present a substantial check. She was to marry a poor young man, a clerk on a small salary. During the time he courted her he spent enough on opera tickets and bon-bons to furnish a house; but their social position was too high to venture beginning life in a three-roomed cottage, with love for a lamp, content for carpets, and hope for a self-feeding stove, so they were to board instead.

I must here say, parenthetically, that the young couple who begin married life in a boarding-house deliberately take their chances of happiness in their own hands, and to do so is as risky as handling a humming-bird and expecting it to live.

The young lady spent all her money gift on a satin wedding-gown. As she entered the church her foolish train fell into the gutter and took on some of the muddy sewer's evil soil. As she

walked slowly up the aisle with the price of a first-class kitchen stove on her back, and then stood before God's altar and vowed to love, honor, and obey Charles Augustus; to live in the back room of a fashionable boarding-house for him, to keep up a visiting list, and do without decent underwear in order to have two seats in a box at the opera, and to always appear well before the Grundy eyes of good society—I could not keep from wondering if true love has not been fired off the earth altogether.

Oh, this cruel thing of keeping up appearances! Oh, this silly way of living out of doors! Of doing and being anything and everything for vanity's sake! Of deliberately becoming a target for jealous criticism and a model for unworthy emulation!

It is so right to be proud of earned comforts. It is so fine to get a hearty joy out of possessions that have been honestly striven for and paid for.

It is not what you have, but how you get it gives value. The snow flower of the Alps, eidelweiss, grows where the deadly glaciers are, where the avalanches are set loose by a sigh; but down in the valleys of the blue lakes any fool who has inherited ten cents can buy a bunch from the returned mountaineer. What he cannot buy with money is manhood, grit, courage, and that fine nobility which has made carpentering a trade royal enough to set a king at it, and lifted the fishing business to levels a trifle higher than stock-jobbing or railroad speculating.

Napoleon told his soldiers that twenty centuries looked down on them. It made them brave and carried them on to victory—that mighty, august contemplation of all the ages of valor. Is the time for inspiration dead? Is there nothing left for us to fire zeal with but money? Is value shriveled to something intrinsic? Is there no one to inspire our silly young ones with the beauty of beginning low and aiming high, with the heroism that is comprised in plucking each one his own eidelweiss?

Sometimes I wonder the preachers in our pulpits do not take up these things. Ought not they to give the first lessons in high living? Ought not they to show us what a Hogarth's picture of foolishness and cankering is the young couple who are married and struggling to keep up "apppearances." Appearances of what? Of conjugal felicity, of real prosperity, of private domestic comfort? No; but the appearance of silk attire, of showy plate, of diamonds that are not real, of luxuries that have not been paid for, a life of sham, sham, sham.

But then I laugh to myself when I think on the picture of a Creamcheese clergyman standing up in his purple pulpit preaching economy, moderation, and meekness to his highly-feathered flock, when he himself is the edition de luxe of Creamcheese clergymen, the very flower of pampered ecclesiastical aristocracy. Where is his authority for being finer than decency and refined tastes require? Are there no empty

stomachs in his parish? Are there no sordid sick rooms more needful of books, pictures, flowers, music, than are the rooms in his stately mansion, that dwarfs any possible tenement reserved for him in the New Jerusalem?

But Lord, Lord; it is not my mission to be a missionary to our Creamcheese clergymen.

One of the most fetching old chestnut stories I ever heard was that of the young wife who would put the baby's linens to air on the front gallery, to the great mortification of her husband, who had not sense enough to know that a healthy baby is better than false pride or mock modesty.

One day he took his wife walking, and, intending to humiliate her and make her ashamed, he led her to a good point of view of the upper gallery, where the objectionable linens were flapping in the wind.

"What is that, my dear?" he said, pointing to them.

"That," said she, fondly taking his arm and giving it a little squeeze. "Why that is the flag of our union."

She was too much for him.

"And long may it wave!" the young father shouted. You make take for granted there was n't much sham in that house, nor envy, hate, and malice in that home.

But to-day find me the counterpart in good, so-called fashionable society of this young couple. Find me the girl who belongs to our first families

who will marry a lover and begin life with him in that nine-dollar-a-month three-roomed cottage, who will carry her own basket and carry her own baby when a dear God sends it to her. This cottage life does not directly indicate poverty, but it would mean thrift, economy, patience, and the joy of seeing a home grow. It would mean beginning together, growing together, and improving together.

Domestic infelicity does not find easy lodgment in a little home where the husband and wife are planning together to add some comfort to it; are saving and economizing, because their aim is high, and they are patient at their climbing.

Almost every rich woman who began her married life in this simple fashion will tell you that those young days had God's sunlight of hope in them, and that none sweeter have ever come to her.

That grand American gentleman, good enough to wipe out the record of fifty Reverend Creamcheeses—Peter Cooper—tells us how he formed his philanthropic plans when he was a young man, and how his young wife and he practiced for years the most rigid economies—laying by money to help other young men and women. This was better than an opera box or the hall bed-room in a fashionable boarding-house.

They were two young soldiers, and the twenty centuries looking down on them found them brave, loyal, and victorious.

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS SERMON.

A LITTLE CHRISTMAS SERMON.

O God, give me a Christmas heart!

Dear and gentle reader, of whatever creed thou art, add this supplication to your prayers.

The world is like a pasture land in which blow many flowers—weeds, creeping vines, delicately fronded and petaled things, sweet and thorny on their short-lived stems, gaudy blooms, comfortable herbs—a limitless list—but the same dew quenches all their thirst.

Of whatever creed or race we may be it is still possible for one universal cry to mount the Jacob's ladder of our dreams and desires—a cry that answers to the one, full note: O God, give me a Christmas heart!

Under all conditions of life the heart remains the same. It beats throb for throb to the hunger cry, the thirst cry, the mourning for its mate. No man need go hungry while another has food; no one need be thirsty while there is drink to fill the parched throat; and I can always ease my ache by ministering to yours.

If I am greedy and keep all for myself—whom is it I deny but myself? What heart is so lonesome as my own when I would herd to myself all the sweetnesses of life? If I am selfish and lock

my doors and cheerful evening fireside blaze away from hearthless hearts, what solitary is so mournful as I? The miser starves his soul of its rightful cheer; the spendthrift locks up the only gold that is current everywhere — the gold of sympathy and infinite comprehension. The law is that we can only have that which is ours by right, and only give of that which is our own to give, and I cannot give smiles unless they come from my heart, nor make another rich in content, save from my own wealth.

The price of kind doing is content and good words, just as surely as the answer to sunshine is a flower.

When we look back on our life, out its back door as it were, we are glad to see only things dear in the remembering.

The lost friend has only a smile on his face —our unkind act gladly merges in his gracious ones. Perspectives sweeten themselves. No grace is so tender as that which clings around the day that is dead. The lost love forever sings a sweet requiem in the heart. The long lounge in my familiar room wears ever for me the white shapes of my dead who rested there in that awful pause between their last farewell and the sullen clods of earth. It has become beautiful because of them and precious above all estimate of the antiquary.

We live by the sunlight and the moonlight of our yesterdays. Last week's gracious act makes our sunshine for to-morrow. God in-

tended us to grace His world, not disgrace it, and so planted in our natures the capacity for infinite joy over good deeds and loving-kindness to all men.

In our final accounts no mercenary triumph will sit on the scales against love or hate. The dollar-mark has not its equivalent in sentiments. When greed comes in at the door generosity evaporates. Selfishness begins where sympathy ends. Oh, lonely soul, how desert-tracked you are when I may not forget my own poor travail long enough to look over the brink of my grief to note the stormy sunrise of your sorrows!

The unforgetable ache is for the selfish and cruel, just so surely as every wound is mended by the salve of graceful deeds. No one need be sorry for long, or solitary, even in his wilderness, who can answer the cry of mortal agony note for note, sure of its meaning because it was also created in himself.

Are you lost in the winter time in the forest? Then send forth your cry. The answer is sure to come from some other lost traveler. Come together, lost ones; make twin the awful diapasons of your dirge, and, as comforted you walk along, the brotherhood of that cry shall become as music in the ear.

Things are so simply told; it is only convention and modern societies that have sent us all bewildered to the unknown tongues of a Tower of Babel.

Have you gone hungry? Well, so have I.

Is your dearest one dead or untrue? Well, that has happened also to me. Is not the whole world kin in sorrows? Therefore, let us each be kind.

When the skies weep the flowers have tears in their eyes. When summer is dead the trees mourn. When the earth puts on a pall the winds sing a melancholy miserere. Shall only you and I, dear heart, stand apart?

Nothing is so simple, so easy as sympathy. You in your mansion, I in my dusty garret, and stretching between us only graves, things lost, things longed for and never had, promises broken, trusts betrayed, let us join hands—your diamonds gently creasing my wrinkles and welts of starving work's making—and together, in the grand universality—the immortal federation—go up to God!

How is it possible that I can hold myself to be better than another? The spruce tree is not jealous of the oak. Both have boughs that storms can twist. It is an accident that the Apollo Belvedere does not mark a grave. The Niobe might have been the foot-block before a door. Yet each would still have held the sculptor's grace that was ready to leap at the chisel's caress into immortality and beauty incomparable.

No man is always good nor was great who lacked the capacities for much passion.

Passion is the immortal lever; it lifted Napoleon, Lincoln—all the heroes. Even the wings of angels sometimes gently droop. And as they

come so dearly, welcomely, near to earth, they fan our hot faces, wine-flushed, passion-stirred, jealousy-vexed, with the very airs of heaven.

Only let us make sure that the angel in me touches some other human with its divinity, and that my frail and sinking mortality bruises no other's wound, but serves to make me compassionate.

O God, give us each a Christmas heart!

Give us hearts to feel at kin with all the world —this hurting, sleep-hungry world, this thronged world, so noisy with the cries of little children, the beggings for bread that is like the bleatings of sheep.

The rose cannot secrete its fragrance, nor the lovable heart its sympathy. If the beautiful statue is in me, let it now be chiseled, that beauty may work its mission. Some must give gold, some forgiveness; some must give humility, others redress for old wrongs. Each of his largess—each of his Christ-child.

And when the quiet skies smile down on quiet hearts that rest at last in the peace that follows good deeds—their sister-angel, when the making-up word has been said, the reproach recalled, the sad one comforted, the injustice righted—then, even if no costly gift comes our way, we shall know, you and I, dear heart, that all is well and the Christ-time has become our own.

THE SONG OF THE NEW YEAR.

THE SONG OF THE NEW YEAR.

One night I sat alongside of my old friend Harper at a school exhibition or children's Christmas festival. How that gray-faced old bachelor who has no friends and asserts no claim to any kindly human interest managed to forsake the dull and dingy quiet of his shabby lodging-house apartment for the bustle and confusion of a school festival I know not; but there he sat, lonesome, lonely, thin, poor, right in the midst of that gay crowd of mothers and big sisters and aunts, all in a pretty flutter of proud excitement.

The walls were hung with holly and wreaths of cedar, and the little stage was like some spicily sweet invitation-card to the deep green forests, with garlands over the doors, a wondrous antlered fir-tree set in the corner, and tufts of mistletoe hanging, with provoking suggestiveness, just over the fair head of the bonny schoolmistress.

There were a number of little children on the stage, tricked out in prim gowns and powdered wigs, and their mothers' old laces and best ribbons. They had played their little round of kindergarten games and given their funny little recitations, and now they had joined hands and,

dancing and skipping like young lambs on a June meadow, they trooped away, singing as they went—

> **For well I know, wherever I go,**
> **The hills grow greener still.**

Old Harper leaned his gray face on his thin hand, and the corners of his mouth drooped curiously. Out under the garlands of holly and scented wreaths of cedar the last little flutter of satin and brocade disappeared, but the sweet, shrill treble of the song still hung in the air—

> **. . . wherever I go,**
> **The hills grow greener still.**

I bent across an oblivious mother, blissfully living over the little triumph of her child, and touched him on the arm, "Hey, old Harper, is that true?" said I.

He raised his quiet eyes and gazed about the room. How gay and happy and hopeful was every one. What a pleasant little buzz of congratulation the mothers and grandmas were in. How bright was everybody and smiling their faces; and still from behind the stage came the music of those little voices that would not leave off their singing.

Old Harper stood up and fastened his thin coat, preparatory to going out into the night. He placed his hand over his heart, and with a half smile and a very tender shining in his quiet eyes, answered me back: "Yes, it is true. It is like the song of the New Year."

And now we have come to the end of our

holiday, and the year that clung so closely to us falls away, and the gates are open upon the unknown country. I cannot but remember how a forlorn, solitary old bachelor was the one to discover in a glad little kindergarten song a marching chorus for all the world. Why should not we all, the timid and anxious, the struggling and successful, the sick ones no less than those in health and prosperity, turn with renewed hopes and fresh inspiration to the unfamiliar foot pathway, believing that wherever we go there the hills will grow greener still, and that on their sunny slopes good things and blessings will come upon us.

This annual setting out on a journey should be made cheerfully and hopefully. The capital of courage will accumulate strength, and it is a good sign when we begin the new life in the new year well, and are unafraid of the untried ways before us. It is best for us and for others if we make the dominant qualities of mind and heart good and gentle. Cheerfulness and sweet temper and a manly courage are respect-compelling traits. Fortune despises with feminine vigor a faint-hearted man, and will punish him for it.

One of the most endearing qualities a man or woman can have, or not having, acquire, is that expressed in the fragment of childish song that old Harper reminds me is a fit song of the New Year. These healthful-minded, sunny-tempered people are welcome wherever they go. They inspire others with something of their own brawny

courage. The faint-hearted lean on them; the doubting ones envy them their blessed belief in the good and true.

There are men and women who can go through the world and have much sorrow and ill-luck for their portion, but who keep undaunted hearts, and who persistently make the best of things and continually anticipate good not evil. A very gentle-hearted philosopher I know says that "nothing is too good to be true." And everything that is good may become true to the man who does not outgrow the innocent joys of life, the sweet little commonplace rounds of commonplace living, nor lose his faith in the sincerity of those about him.

It was said of that sunshiny-hearted little woman, Miss Mitford, that to the very end of her seventy years she kept her tenderness of heart, her exquisite enjoyment of the commonplace pleasures of daily life. This is the best that can be said of a woman: to the last tender-hearted and sympathetic, able to laugh and make merry over simple amusements, to have a busy interest in a new flower, to keep kind words and good cheer for the faint-hearted, and to never outgrow the little every-day joys and griefs about her. She believes good news more readily than she will bad; and she is slow to be affronted by her friends, dull to perceive ugliness and selfishness in others; and when her sweet face, along with old Harper's and the myriads of other faces, presses up to the open gates that swing in upon

the new and unknown land, you can be very sure that her path will be along the way to Arcady—to Arcady, "where all the woods are merry."

We want no mournful dirge over the old year's dying; no gloomy faces and raven voices, croaking evil; no faint-hearted ones about us anywhere. Such ones court disaster and freeze up the fountains of content and cheerfulness, and give out a subtle poison that can make all life bitter to us. There is no poison more evil than that of the croaker, that black-browed, frowning old codger, who believes, and tries to make others believe, that the green hills are all behind, and that only barren moors are yet to come. He has the power of spreading a vast deal of discomfort; his evil influences are balefully contagious and most of all he is not a shrewd speculator, for he has no sense of the value of keeping up appearances, of putting the best foot foremost, of persistently making the best of things. He has no pride in his city, and is one of those who drag it down. And never in his life, did he press forward into a new year, singing in his heart that sweet inspiring song—

> **For well I know, wherever I go,**
> **The hills grower greener still.**

The thought of old Harper turning from that gay school festival, from the shout and song and feasting to his fireless, childless hearth in the shabby lodging-house, waiting for the new year with that song of blessed hope on his lips—is even less sweet than the thought of one other whom I

know lies with languid body and a pure soul waiting to "give up to a patient God her patient heart."

Young and lovely, all of life—that short, bright life where all the hills are green—has been sweet for her and those who shared it with her. What a bonny, bright, and brave young woman she has been; forever making the best of things, forever giving out good and adding to the home happiness. Like little Miss Mitford, she never lost her exquisite enjoyment of the commonplace pleasures of daily life. She has always said pleasant things and refrained from bitter doubts or from any idle words that might hurt or dishearten any creature. Her little world has been the better for her.

And now in a flower-banked room—a beautiful room—where the sun shines in at the windows, and there are loving hearts all about her, where a tranquil peace and a gentle courage broods like a white dove, all unafraid, with wide smiling eyes, she turns her white face toward the unknown country of the New Year. She sings in her heart the same blithe song as those dancing, kindergarten children, who troop off under the mistletoe wreaths and the holly, the same song that old Harper, alone in his dingy room, whistles softly so as not to wake up the other lodgers. It is a song full of hearty cheer and the loftiest courage—of the most blessed belief in immortality. I wish that its faith and its beautiful meaning might penetrate every anxious

heart turning so timidly to the unknown path that leads across the wilds to far green hills, and somehow, as I think on it, I am reminded of the wistful song of that gentle-hearted Charles Lamb, who wrote of Hester—

> My sprightly neighbor, gone before
> To that unknown and silent shore,
> Shall we not meet as heretofore
> Some summer morning.

TWO OLD BROWNIES.

TWO OLD BROWNIES.

"I am just itching to git in there and red up a bit," said Mrs. Hawks to herself, standing on tiptoe to see the better.

"If it was put in order—apple pie order—it would be too pretty for jist a lot of petticoated men," she continued, addressing the air.

Solitary people often fall into the way of talking out loud to themselves, and it does have a gruesome sound; but none knew that better than did Mrs. Hawks, and whenever she caught herself at it—overheard herself, as it were—she scolded herself roundly, out loud, as a matter of course, because she said it scared her.

It was a dull little room in which the lady stood, but at least it needed no "redding" up. It had all that angular virtue that defies poverty —cleanliness. The curtainless window-panes were like polished plates of crystal, and the forlorn little hospital cot in the corner was set with that precise neatness that is almost pathetic. On the floor was a horsehair trunk that had belonged to Mrs. Hawks' mother.

Against the wall was a table covered with neat sheets of tissue paper, and spread with a few

relics left over from some less unhappy days. Here was a large gilt cup and saucer, with "Remember Me" printed on it; here was a cheap glass candlestick and an old-fashioned ambrotype in a veneered, wooden frame containing the portrait of a rosy-cheeked country-looking young man. Near the door was a small charcoal furnace pushed in close to the tiny, empty fireplace, and by the window was a low table and chair, at which Mrs. Hawks sat all day long, making paper flowers for a living—or, I beg pardon—I should have said for a starving. She called hers a flimsy trade and a mocking of nature: this making bride's wreaths in spring and grave wreaths in the fall, as if paper flowers could help out sorrow or add to joy.

She was a cross old woman. She did not think well of people. She hated children; and all the forlorn little ones who lived—there, I beg pardon again—starved in the same lodging-house with her called her "the old witch," and ran when they caught the ghostly whispering of her footsteps on the stair. But one day little Baby Allie, whose somewhat disreputable mamma did day's work, leaving her poor leaf in the storm of life to be blown just as the winds of misfortune might elect, knocked at Mrs. Hawks' door with the unconquerable and lovable confidence of a little child, and asked as sweetly and hopefully as ever a request was proffered, "Please give Allie a candy." The old, sour woman slammed the door on the tiny applicant and bawled to her:

"Go 'way, you dirty little brat; I an't got nothing for the likes of you."

Do you know if I had to paint the pictures of the little children crying in the night-time—these forlorn, worse than motherless young ones, crying for hearts and care and tender comfort—why I think I should paint a dim, forbidding door, and a little, solitary child, pummeling its hard panels with her sweet, unharmful fist.

"And would you not have the good angels just coming out to see who was there?"

Oh, I do n't know! I do n't know! You see, in this hard, cold world of ours they do not always answer the bell—these good angels.

Mrs. Hawks' windows looked down on a high wall—a red brick wall that had once been stuccoed with stone, and that was set all along its edges with artistic monumental stone balls, such as one sees on cemetery walls in Europe and on Italian villas in America.

Mrs. Hawks did not know it, but that wall was charming. Here and there the broken stucco had made red wounds of brick, and in the always shady places a queer wrinkled lichen or mould, like a green frown, had come out and puckered itself over the general defeat.

But, between us, was the old wall routed? Was it not the lovelier for all its rime and wrinkle? And then, slowly creeping over it was the delicatest little leafed vine clinging to the torn, worn fabric with all its force of tendrils—just as a little child might cling to some one's

knee—why, for all the world as that little Allie might cling to hard, worn, torn, weather-beaten, wrinkled old Mrs. Hawks.

And when the sun came out he painted pictures on that wall. Ah, what an artist he is! At this moment he has put on a pale buff curtain at the back of me, the exquisite image of a Moorish arch. It is only the shadow of one of the green gallery posts, but this generous magician paints it there like some sweet, slender ghost out of old Madrid.

On that mellow yellow and salmon and gray stone canvas he painted tirelessly—now a tall lamp that swung on an iron gibbet; now a slender spire and a timid cross cleaving the sky—now the bulge of a fat cistern, or the oval of a huge water-jar, or an arched column of the arcade, or, perhaps, even the portly shadow of Father Carolus reading his lesson, or Lay Brother John scraping the copper pots.

For the clean windows of Mrs. Hawks looked down on the steep side-walls of a little church, where neither fashion nor wealth nor influence worshiped; and beside the church was an untidy court, and then a ramshackle, half-ruined brick building, in which, by the courtesy or indifference of an alien landlord, the priests of the sanctuary lived drearily.

They had three or four big, gloomy rooms, and on the uneven floors, like wrecks at sea, were scattered a few desolate pieces of furniture, a wobbling round table, a low-spirited sideboard, a

few horsehair chairs, gone quite mangy from their association with time; a couple of big, black mahogany beds, for all the world like the grand high altar in the cathedral of St. Peter's at Rome, and in the huge kitchen a big range, on the corner of which, when the forlorn men had no cook—and that was almost always—they stewed a mixture which they fondly believed to be soup; and when they had finished eating they washed at the bowls and tall octagon-sided tumblers in a way that, as Mrs. Hawks told herself, was "enough to curdle the blood."

You see Mrs. Hawks could not help watching her neighbors. To see them was all she had to see; for it never occurred to her to watch the changing story of that old stone wall, and, then, I don't know but that Mrs. Hawks would just regularly have petrified if she had not had something human to watch.

Now, my dear friend, do you not love to watch your neighbors? I do not, of course, mean in any spirit of carping criticism, but just because they are human and you are human. Why, you are all wrong in your humanities if you can't take a friendly interest in the strange bride you see rushing in a coach to her wedding; you are all wrong if the sunshine of other people's happiness does not paint some sort of picture on your heart. Do n't I love to hear the doctor's wife call in her bonnie brood to their evening bread and milk, and do I not love to watch them at their wholesome meal through the

thornless lattice of roses that is the only barrier between my neighbor and me? As I pass the widow H.'s do I not often stop and smile in at the Madonna that hangs like a guardian angel on her parlor wall? Do I not know what time it is in the evening when I see the light in my neighbor Lizzie's nursery, and know she is putting her young ones to bed? And do I not always joy to see through the windows the shining silver and Wedgewood wares of my neighbor T. on winter nights? Oh, I can promise you one thing, that when the shutters are shut in our neighborhood you may be sure we are all gone to bed, because it is our belief that lights in the windows should spread their messages of cheer just as far as such lights can shine.

Well, I must say that Mrs. Hawks had a good deal to look at. There was the cheerless little church altar seen through the high side-window, with its dusty Madonna and its flowerless niches, and there was the long array of untidy rooms; the slipshod attempts at cooking, the pathetic efforts at making beds—for I do contend that one of the most pitiful sights in life is to see a man trying to do a woman's work.

"Them 's the most womanless men I ever did see," cried Mrs. Hawks one day, as she watched Brother John setting the table.

"Sakes alive! can't you put nothing down without spilling it?" she bawled at the top of her voice as Brother Andrew, as awkward a lout as ever asked God's forgiveness, fetching in a yel-

low bowl of soup, full to the brim, splashed its greasy contents over his old torn soutane and on the dim mahogany of the huge round-table. This was a speech that could only have been transmitted by that modern fad they call "mental telepathy," but it really riled Mrs. Hawks to see how that awkward priest spilled the soup; and as she said, it made her so nervous she could hardly sit still to see them sit down to eat without first wiping up the spilled food.

"Men is all hogs," remarked Mrs. Hawks to Mrs. Hawks; and the latter lady did not dispute the aphorism.

"I should think they would be ashamed to look that big white lady of theirn in the face," she also added to Mrs. Hawks.

It may, perhaps, be inferred that Mrs. Hawks was not deeply religious. When you are born poor, and live poor, and have even of your poverty taken from you, it is not exactly conducive to religion, especially when none of the clergymen think it worth while to invite your attention to a better world, of course, beyond the skies.

"I don't know no Gawd but a Gawd of war," she had cried bitterly to the one unfashionable clergyman who had thought it might pay him (at judgment day) to call on her. "It was your Gawd of war that tuk away my man and my boy, and all my kith and kin, all I had, and left me stropped. I ain't got no call to believe in Him," she added, hysterically.

The little minister did not know what to say.

She was acquainted with griefs whose bitters he had never tasted. It made him ashamed to proffer those religious commonplaces with which the unsuffering get away from the anguishes of the suffering.

"He doeth all things well." Oh, how many things He doth, whose wisdom we shall doubt until death gives us the compensation of His knowledge!

Well, I do n't know but what Father Carolus and Brother Andrew and Lay Brother John were ashamed to look their sweet, white lady in the face.

You see, they were so poor! Only a meager handful of market women ever seemed to worship in the little church, and as for funerals and weddings and christenings—why, it just seemed as if nobody ever died or got married or was born. And as for their house—it was only once a week they could depend on Dinah, a lazy darky, barefooted and tied up like a meal bag in the middle, who came slopping in to slick up things in the indifferent fashion of a servant who does not expect any perquisites for doing for these big men.

And she did "do" for them. She stole of their frugal possessions, and she cleaned their copper pots by scraping them with a knife. Mrs. Hawks used to watch her, burning with indignation the meanwhile. One day she could contain herself no longer, and lifting her window she called out, "Why do n't you scrub that there pot with some ashes?"

But the sleazy darky had called back: " 'T ain't none of yo' business, yo' po' white trash."

But, although Mrs. Hawks knew it not, Father Carolus felt bad enough over the manifest discomfort and unrefinement of his home. In the morning, when he sat down to the cup of muddy coffee, his heart was homesickened because of the dust and grime; and when it was his turn, and he scraped away at the floor and broke the precious dishes, he meekly took his well-deserved scolding from Brother Andrew.

One day, as they were about to sit down to their scanty meal they found out there was not a clean dish in the house.

Oh, things did look lonesome that day! There on the low-spirited mahogany buffet, were a dozen or more dirty glasses and bread crumbs and wine stains and rusty knives. In the kitchen the soup kettle had accumulated little silver beards of hardened broth, and the vinegar cruet was full of mother and the oil bottle was blurred with stains.

Dinah was there, and she slapped the bread, soup and salad, and scanty portions of thin, red wine down on the bare table. The bread was on a broken plate, the soup in a coarse yellow bowl, the mite of wine in a glass jug, and after Father Carolus had asked God's blessing on this poor food he was waited on by fat, dirty, contented Dinah.

As he said grace the thoughts of Father Carolus went back to a vine-clad porch in the

Pyrenees; to a small, square table pushed back against the whitewashed wall; to the coarse, crash table linen, the savory dish of ragout, the little blue bowl of salads and radishes, the stone jug full of cool, pure wine from his father's vineyard, and meanwhile his mother cutting thick slices of bread from the homely brown loaf. He could smell that fresh-baked bread and the pungent thyme. As old Mrs. Hawks sat at her flower-making she could see these cheerless men at their cheerless meal. Her gaze went with the sunshine, and by and by it fell across the dingy window that looked in on the dusty Madonna—the sad, white lady, lonesome in her niche.

As she observed it Mrs. Hawks scowled. "Jist see the dust in them creases of her gown," she said out loud. "I always told you them womanless men would jist go to the dogs. They don't know how to clean."

The winter wore on and Mrs. Hawks was kept busy making flowers for altars, for brides, for coffins, and for happy anniversaries.

Almost every day, as she came in from the shop, it seemed that that pestering little Allie was a cluttering under feet. More than once the old woman cried at the harmless little thing, "Clear out, you nasty little brat."

Allie never got washed, you see, and it was her dirt, more than any thing else, that made Mrs. Hawks hate her. Only the narrow-minded old woman did not know that it was her duty to baptize the little child in the pool of cleanliness—

just as John, in the long ago days, baptized his Lord.

It was the day before Christmas, and Mrs. Hawks was coming home from the flower shop, where she had sold gay wreaths of holly and imitation mistletoe, and, in fact, all her wares except a little wreath of ivy and roses that the shopkeeper had said he had no call for.

As she walked along the pavement before her door she passed the narrow alley that led into the house of the priest. She stopped. That tall, green gate was ajar. She leaned against it with her lank, spare body, and, as it yielded, she found herself, in spite of herself, walking along the dark alleyway. In a moment she had come to the foot of the stairs, and her ugly, knobby, wrinkled hand was on the brass railing. Not a sound could she hear. A rat gnawing in the wood-box in the kitchen could be heard plainly. Evidently no one was at home, "unless one of them priests," she whispered to herself, "is upstairs a muttering prayers to hisself." She did not know it, but Father Carolus and Brother Andrew and Lay Brother John were all off at a celebration at the great cathedral.

Mrs. Hawks slowly climbed the dirty stairs. She stood for a moment on the gallery, and finally, saying things under her breath, she turned the handle of a door and entered one of the rooms.

"Well, I never!" she said to herself, and no wonder. Was ever such a dusty floor, such an

unkempt fireplace, such untidy pots and pans, such an ill-made bed?

Mrs. Hawks found a bucket, a rag, and some soap; and while I do not go so far as to countenance trespassing, I must say it was beautiful to see how cleanliness grew under her stubby fingers and homely hand.

She scrubbed the floor, she washed the window, she draped the old torn Nottingham lace curtain, she plumped up the pillows, she shined the kitchen tins, she set the simple dinner table daintily and as it had never been set before, she gave a vicious rub to all the brass; and when she had finished—this hard old heretic—she hung her wreath of ivy and roses on the feet of the big white lady whom, by the way, she had treated to a real good scrubbing.

And then—well, I do n't know how to tell you what she did next. Mrs. Hawks had never seen inside a Catholic church, and as she surreptitiously lifted the latch of the side-door and slipped in, her heart almost froze as she heard one of the brats in her lodging-house cry out from an upper window, "See, old witchy is a-goin' to mass."

The gaunt sanctuary was entirely empty save for herself.

In the tiny gallery was nothing but the small melodeon, on which a quavering old maid at the high mass picked out a few doleful notes. In the chancel was a dusty altar, and Mrs. Hawks timorously ran the hem of her apron around the communion rail to clear it of the dust.

Over the altar hung a dying Christ. He seemed to look right down on Mrs. Hawks. Without stopping to think she opened the railing gate, and, leaning over the altar, took up the hem of her gown and wiped those pierced feet clean of dust. As she did so she thought of how Mary had wiped the feet of the real Christ with her beautiful hair. "It were n't white, like mine," she said aloud.

By the door was a beautiful bowl, and it was half full of water; so Mrs. Hawks went back into the priest's courtyard and pulled from the old walls great sprays of the unwilling ivy. This she laid in long branches along the white wastes of the altar and in the bowl of holy water, and then, pleased with her work, she leaned back in one of the pews to rest.

Mrs. Hawks put her gray head, her sharp face, her startling profile—luminous with age—against the dull stone wall. The church was full of little, soft noises—of the sweet silence of the sanctuary. A fold of lace stirred on the altar; a stained window rattled feebly; a little plaint of warping wood came from the crown of thorns; a breath of damp air flickered in a whisper down the long, dim aisle.

Mrs. Hawks suddenly sat up and opened her eyes. My! it must be late, and where on earth was she?

It was still the old church, and night had come on as she dozed. Under the shrine of Mary, old Father Carolus was kneeling beside a

crib, in which there slept a little babe. For a moment Mrs. Hawks thought dully it was "that brat Allie." Father Carolus was placing straw and evergreens and candies, and pretty soon the sweet, Christmasy smell of the cedar pervaded the little place with a perfume more eloquent than that of incense.

Slowly the forlorn, childless, old woman, whose only god was a god of war, drew near.

The dull rustle of her poor garment made Father Carolus look up. His heart was stirred to its fountain-head by his sacred offices. He did not know she was the old woman Hawks, and he only saw one of God's children to whom it was his mission to tell the sweet story of old.

"Ah, my child," said he, "see how he sleeps. He is not yet hungry for all the hunger of the world—he is not yet sad for all the sorrows of the world—he is not yet weeping for all the sins of the world. He is only a little child that any mother might suckle at her breast—a little baby like those we can hear in the street."

"They ain't much of the Gawd of war about him," said the old woman, putting forth a bony finger to give the crib a small, experimental shove.

Old Father Carolus looked up amazed. He could see the face at the end of the tall, gaunt frame that towered duskily and gloomily above him. He supposed she was one of his parishioners, but the note of disillusion and unloveableness hurt his heart.

"He is never that—our dear Lord," he answered gravely and sweetly. "Have you forgotten how he lay in the manger and the kings of earth were not too royal or too fine to come to him on their knees with offerings to sweeten and soften his poor straw?"

Father Carolus turned back to the holy crib, and placed afresh the wisps of straw under the waxen head that was so real to him.

Mrs. Hawks slipped out of the church, and as she neared the door she looked back on the pallet of straw, on the dear Bambino there, on Father Carolus easing the little head under its rude, symbolic pillow.

Father Carolus entered his house. He gazed about with a startled face. He had been bred in a fairy tale country, and he said, innocently, to himself, "Surely, there has been a Brownie here." When had the homely table been so daintily set? Who had placed ivy at the pure feet of his Holy Mother? Who had swept the hearth and plumped the pillows? Who had filled the kettle and laid the fire ready for lighting?

It was almost midnight when Mrs. Hawks knocked timidly at the door of the poor room in which baby Allie was getting her first experience of that April fool riddle we call "life." A wretched, remorse-stricken woman, with great tear-blots on her face, opened the door resentfully.

Mrs. Hawks pushed her way in and knelt by Allie's pallet on the floor. Somehow, to herself,

in a strange, dramatic way, she seemed to be like the old priest ministering to the Christ-child in the church. "Only a little child that any mother might suckle at her breast." She could hear this over and over again beating in her brain until in a terror of human anguish she cried out —"Lord, forgive me!"

She placed by the baby's side a big apple, and a cheap—cheap, did I say? why it was worth all the wealth of the princes of Europe—a dollie and a little tarletan bag filled with candies.

"Why—why—" began the woman.

But Mrs. Hawks took the mother's hand and smoothed it gently between her own old, rough palms, and together they knelt by their Bambino's bed until the Christmas bells "rang out the old and rang in the new."

GIFTS OF ROSES.

GIFTS OF ROSES.

When the summer first comes there must be, even for the dullest and most hopeless worker, a brief thanksgiving and joy of living.

What a blessed good thing it is that the world's best riches cannot be put under lock and key! You can fasten away in your iron safe your coupons and your deeds of sale, but you cannot prison away all the blowing flowers nor the blue of the summer sky, nor the smell of the sweet cut clovers, nor the whirr of bird's wings across the common, all dappled with the yellow bloom of some joyous weed. You may live in a castle, but you cannot altogether, when you bar its door, rob the outsider of the beauty of it. My neighbor's wall must be very high to shut in the fragrance of his roses.

Were you ever in a dusty side street where roses never are, when a fine carriage rolled by? How the tired women ran to the windows to catch a glimpse, and the little barefooted boys cried "catch behind"; and the older children wondered morbidly whose funeral it was.

Really, if I were rich and had a carriage, I think that at least once a week I would go driving in all my grandeur along the dull "no

thoroughfares," just to please the denizens there.

It is noontime, and I know it because the roosters are crowing. I want no better clock than a good reliable old "dominick" rooster, who will crow at the proper hours; that is, at noon, at midnight, at four in the morning, and at three in the afternoon, and who also thoughtfully comes on the porch and crows when "strangers are coming,"—just to let you know.

But it seems to me that at this time of the year it ought to be easy for any one to tell the noon hour. It comes just when the hens have stopped their soft, sleepy caw, and when everything out of doors drowses—even the warm winds rubbing against the new leaves, and when the roses droop on their stalks, hiding and nursing all the sweetness in them.

Ah, this time of roses! I wonder if even the ironed prisoner in his weary cell, crawling to his bit of window that gives mercifully on the sweet and tender sky, is not stirred to remember that now is the time of roses? We went for a walk this morning, myself and I, and it led us along the narrow, unfrequented streets, where the grass is thick enough to scuffle in, and where wild mustard and sweet clovers take the pavements and Cherokee hedges are already sprouting their delicate cups of bloom.

Now and then was a tiny cottage all trellised with roses, making of itself a huge bouquet. The bees purred over it, and a little white rain of

withering petals fell noiselessly down into the deep grasses. Overhead the tranquil sky dazzled with its pure and innocent blue. I met an old darky creeping along in the sunshine, and asked her where she was going; but she was n't going anywhere—"jest a-making free with the day."

Oh! keep your carriages and your yachts, and secrete your bank books, my dear rich ones; we will only fight when you put the sweet summer air on the list as taxable property, and roof in from us the sunshine and its big, blue, grand reflector.

I came to a canal; perhaps it was the city sewerage, but then I did not know, nor try to find out. It seemed a length of dark-brown mirror, all fern-set and rimpled at the edge with pale green rushes and scented reeds, that might have made the pipes of Pan. A big bridge was near by, and moored under its shadow was a blue painted lugger—its red sail untied and drooping to the water. Some oyster baskets lay on the boat, and a conch shell was by the tiller. A man was there asleep, his pipe half fallen from his mouth. He, too, was "making free with the day." A little, curly, yellow dog sat on its haunches beside him, and barked at me impertinently. Well, that was all right. Have not each one of us the right to bark?

I turned and got back to town. I am afraid of the woods. Is there anything so solitary as to be alone where nothing is but nature? To

hear the ghostly whispering of the trees telling their secrets to each other, to feel the slow, even breathing of the wind, to know the calm, steady grandeur of it all—the unvexed serenity, the stainlessness of the untrodden vines and the fearlessness of the least of the little wood animals.

After all, roses are tame things. One must really come to town or near to the habitations of men to find them.

Once I saw a lady going along the gloomiest and ugliest of dirty town alleys, and she carried in her hand a royal bunch of roses. Two sick-looking, faded, sunshine-hungry little children playing in a doorway with two empty tin cans ran after her saying, "please give me a flower." But she shook her hateful head and went on, as deaf as the hard and selfish and unfeeling ever are to those heart-hungry ones who ask for only roses,

It set me to thinking, and I am afraid that day I was not so sure as I am to-day, or at least as I said I am, that the best and sweetest riches of life cannot be locked away from the veriest pauper who would possess them.

Dear heart, patient, brave, unfamous worker, do n't we know how many of the roses and the beautiful things are all for just one set of people?

Is not all the hubbub and stir made over those who have never been lost? When we meet in our beautiful parlors and say our little pieces and read our little poems and air our little graces, of whom are we thinking save ourselves?

We talk about our affairs as if we were the

world—we who make no kettle, beat no iron, carve no image, sing no song, mix no loaf, and hem no garment! Oh, what vanity have we! We take all the roses we can reach, leaving only those which God says shall be free, but even cutting those as close as we dare.

Tolstoi's religion is grand, but it is impracticable. Unfortunately, it seems that most of the grand impulses are impracticable. We need not put aside our silk socks, because to do that would not give silk socks to the poor; we may not stop our parties and feasts, nor our lecture courses, because these things are for those who can get them, and those who cannot must do without and thank God they are no worse off. But for our selfish use and keep of these fine things, we can comfort ourselves with the trite philosophy that we are the elect, the saving remnant, and that these good things have come to us by natural selection.

One of the most beautiful gifts of roses of which I ever heard was once when the grand-voiced Christine Nilsson went back to her old home and sang there before the nobles and royalty of her land. But there were thousands who could not enter the theatre because they were too poor to pay the price. Nevertheless, they were loyally proud of their great townswoman, and when the opera was over they crowded the street before her hotel door, anxious to see her as she entered. And when she did arrive they thundered the night with their applause.

That was just natural lovingness. They gave then freely of their roses. But my grand lady went to her room; she opened the window and came out on the tiny balcony, and, standing there in the starlight and the lovelight, she sang to those touched and weeping multitudes as she had never sung for money.

Oh, dear heart, we work bravely for the dollars, don't we? but when we work for love, when we put love into our seam and gusset and band, isn't that the best work of all? Do you not serve best those customers who are kindest—do you not put something more than the silk and needle into the gown you are making for the one who never forgets you are just a woman like herself, and human and sensitive too?

Well, she sang there for an hour, and she won something from that populace that all the omnipotence of an emperor cannot command, and that is only to be had through the heart.

Anybody can give money if he has it, but there are other things within our power that are as precious as bank checks. This will be a hard, tough old world when all the loving sympathy and tender comprehension of the needs, weaknesses and temptations of those about us has died out of our hearts and left us stolid and numb to the touch of nature.

Once I heard Mr. Matthew Arnold lecture on the subject of the saving remnant. It was his first appearance in America, and the tall, gaunt Englishman, who only needed a napkin on

his arm to transform him into a first class butler, was the central figure of a group of distinguished men and women. I remember I sat on the platform with Parke Goodwin and George William Curtis, and thought myself particularly blessed. I had not one thought of the hungry ones who could not have my chance to hear the great critic criticize. The subject was "Numbers," and Mr. Arnold taught, as he went on, that the world is ruled by minorities, and that the saving remnant, possessing brains, culture—and I am afraid he included refinement—can, and do, easily dominate the big, sweating, working majorities.

I suppose the "Saving Remnant" think this is true; and in a measure it is. The working world is busy now at its task of sweetening life for those who toil not and yet are weary. It is for them we make the grand pararde; the best books are printed only for the saving few; the beautiful music is only for the rich; the glorious architecture of the church is for the rich; the magazines are published to appeal to a traveled and favored class; and even the fashionable novel is full of suggestions that are only intelligible to a certain few with whom the writer desires to establish a sort of mental camaraderie. We make our elegant little cliques of fashionable folk, and with them we discuss poetry and the fine arts, and we have nothing in common with that huge Demos; we have something else to engage our great minds besides the needs, the sorrows, the starvation of the great, big world, whose brave hands and

stout arms and patient hearts are furnishing us the bread and meat that fills our stomachs and the cloth that covers our nakedness.

My great lady rides past in her carriage, and she looks out with a wrinkled brow on the walking world, She is vexed and troubled, and her heart is sad. She has money, power, position.

She rules a few, even in this free America, and many hats are off to her, not through love and loyalty, but because she is the wife of a great man and a rich employer. Therefore they fear her frown and creep for her smile. The best is for her because she belongs to the saving remnant. How important then it is, that she be sweet-hearted and true, and generous, and willing to share whatever roses God sends to flower in her way. Perhaps that is why He leaves some lives so bleak and bare for the sweet sake of giving you and me the chance of learning the dear delight and solace inexpressible of doing good and brightening sombre places.

It is all wrong for the world if the thing that puckers her brow is the misfit of a new gown, or the refreshment for a tea to the four hundred, whom I take it, is meant by the phrase "saving remnant,"—that is, in these days. Her carriage is stopped by a dray. The driver pulls at his tired mules. Behind him, in long vistas, are a thousand such as he. The sweat is on his brow; the muscles of his arms stand out like whipcord. If strength is needed, there it is; if courage is

needed, there it is; a fighter is wanted for the fray, there he is.

On the sidewalk pass streams of men and women on their way home from work. They come from the shops, the factories, the desk, and the counting-rooms. Behind them are millions more —the weary workers of all the towns. They have made the bread, and brewed the drink, and wrought the cloth, and blown the fire, and have done to-day's work of all the world. Now they are going home, not to the beautiful things they have made, nor to the dainty dishes their skill has composed, nor to the music and good cheer, but to skimped economies and privations, to the homely fare and the simple living that leaves no room for discontent because its every hour is full with honest and wholesome work.

My dear madam, are you one of the Saving Remnants? There must always be mulberry trees for the-silk worms to feed on; for we must grow silk, not that the rich may wear it, but that we may sell it to—the few who have so much to share besides money—their pictures, their music, their happy hearts. One who is surrounded with the material comforts of life ought never to let the thistles of hard words, unkind speech, evil thoughts, choke up the beautiful gardens of their prosperity. You cry because your dress did not fit and go to bed ill. You are wretched because you were not bidden to the ball; you fill your life with petty tragedies when all about you are women towering like altars above their real

heart-aches or voicelessly mumbling over the miserable addition and subtraction of cents and cents, and never able to balance the petty whole.

Once a year we place roses reverently on the dear earth that holds our dead. Would it not be as well if sometimes we sweetened the lives of the living, who touch us never so distantly, with the roses of friendly comment, the roses of gracious smiles, the roses of unselfish acts?

BY THE WINDOW.

BY THE WINDOW.

It is just twilight, and there has somehow fallen a gentle hush all over the house. The doors between the dining-room and kitchen are ajar, and now and again you hear the snap of the kitchen fire while the murmuring singing of the tea-kettle is so soothing as to be but a part of the dim, gray silence. You have listened so long to the slow "tick-tock" from the solemn-faced old clock in the corner that you no longer hear it. With wavering finger you turn a crisp page of the neglected book upon your knee. The rustle sounds mysterious and startles you, so that for one moment you force yourself to look fixedly at the gathering shadows about the black figure of the gaunt and grim old clock. Reassured, you sink back into the downy depths of the great arm-chair, and with reflective face and eyes that wist not what they see, look out through the dim window-panes upon the still and fast fading world. Fold after fold, the misty mantle of the night is outspreading and falling over the red cottages and gently stirring trees, and high fences, so that in a little while it is but a bare, gray, sighing ghost of a world that your blank eyes stare at.

This twilight hour becomes the harvest time of thought, and not unwillingly you go back trying to gather up all the might-have-beens and bind them into sheaves. Ah, you cannot do it; there were too many, and perhaps, for a moment, a bitter frantic idea possesses you, and you call out all the bell-men of your energies, and set them a ringing through the night-time and crying with hollow voices "Lost! lost!"

And then you smile over the poor shade who was yourself in the yesterday; for somehow when you regard yourself it is only the Jones of to-day and to-morrow who is alive and within whose veins the warm blood flows. The Jones of yesterday is dead to you; and with the easy triumphant generosity of the living you look at least pityingly on his poor faults and weaknesses. You erect, after all, in your mind a pretty respectable monument over your deceased self of yesterday, the virtues string out to elaborate length, and you conclude that if Jones had only had the chance, he might have been—a good deal that he was not.

Poor Jones! And now you come to think of it the fellow had n't any glaring faults—nothing for which you, as nearest mourner of the deceased, need blush in shame. He never gambled, nor lied, nor got drunk, nor cheated his customers, nor murdered anybody, nor stole any money. And so, contentedly you give the poor old bones a shake and would bury them deep again, when a small, fine dust floats out from

the rattling joints, and the view is not so luminous as it was. Gad! what a lot of this dust there is, and it settles on you and tickles your nostrils and makes you cough uncomfortably, and you wonder if this dust, whose motes are all little faults, ever aggravated Jones's friends in the days of his lusty manhood.

Somehow, these motes prick you, as if they had got down into your conscience, and now, sorely against your will, look back into the life which was your own, and which, for all it 's as dead as a door nail, wo n't "down" any better than Banquo's ghost.

You had a friend once—a dear friend, whom you were certain you never should forget or neglect, and the very last time you clasped hands with him you vowed eternal constancy from the bottom of your heart.

And then fate slipped in between, and anchored you in one State and your friend in another. For two years letters went regularly to and fro, and then the demon of neglect hid your pen, stopped up your ink bottle, and his last friendly letter lay yellowing and unanswered on your desk. Day after day you swore you 'd answer it, and when it stared at you remorse produced some very startling and uncomfortable emotions about your heartstrings.

I do n't suppose one could feel any worse after doing a murder than one feels after the neglect of a duty. At first it cuts you like a knife; but then the edges are dulled, you get a

haggard, self-pitying look in the face, and you will whine out to anybody who will listen, for it 's a comfort to make such false confessions even to the bare walls, that "you can't do everything; you have n't time to attend to your own affairs"; and, if you are very remorse-stricken, you "wish to God that you were dead."

Shame, which is a sort of second cousin to remorse, sneaks in then, and after shame comes a despairing decision that "it 's too late" to write now. Your friend will never forgive you or understand your neglect, nor how it grew like a poisonous fungus on your good intention.

I hate those words, "It 's too late now," and they leap so readily to our lips when our purpose is weak and wobbling. We say them so many times, days and weeks and years, before they are true, and then stolidly believe they are true, because we are too cowardly and too weak to prove them false.

And so you lost your friend, and years after, when, with hardened effrontery, you, *you*, throw a plank across the gulf and try to snatch at his hands, as if it were but yesterday you parted from him, then you learn that it is "too late now."

You might as well fan and puff at the dead embers of a last year's fire as to try and revive a friendship or a love that has died of neglect.

Neglect of his friends, putting off the performance of his sacred duties to them, unpunctuality, selfish disregard of their anxiety and interest in

him—these were some of Jones's little faults, and somehow the thought of them, knowing that you are wearing this dead man's shoes, and that his dust still clings to them—weighs heavily on you and gives you that curious and awful sense of impending calamity that is a just punishment and retribution.

You have a curious impression, too, that in your to-day and to-morrow you cannot be anything or do anything the germs of which were not in Jones's life.

And now that you have been set a-thinking, you turn this poor skeleton of your past—of what you were—about in your mind, and you marvel that the joints and bones should hold so much dust, and you see how it permeated your life and affected, not only yourself, but those who were dear to you, and dried and withered their interest in you.

Now, honestly, did you really love the girl you married, or did you only have a selfish desire that she should love you? which is a very different thing, let me tell you—for the girl. And, in the little acts of your life, has self always been subordinate to purpose? Still, of all these atoms none affect you so uncomfortably as the one called neglect. In the aggregate of faults to which poor, human man is heir, it is an atom; in your own life it has been a huge, distorted stumbling-block. It has cost you friends, position, fame, and money. You have neglected to give affectionate words, which are the gentlest,

most beautiful genii the will can summon forth; you have broken your promises, you have failed to see your friends, to answer their letters, to obey their little familiar commands that after all were such slight trespass on your time—these were the faults of yourself that is dead—yourself of yesterday—and so it happens that you, the warm-blooded, expectant Jones of to-day and to-morrow, must season all your plans with dead-sea fruit. Ah, yes, Jones, your present is always the autumn of your past, and to-day you reap what yesterday was sown, and the seeds of to-day shall be to-morrow's fruit.

HAVE WE GOOD MANNERS?

HAVE WE GOOD MANNERS?

Many a traveling philosopher has constructed an entire civilization from the jawbone of an ass.

Many another has built up a whole system of political economy on no further proofs than the street manners of the people.

It is true after all, that, when in public, in a crowd and lost there, men and women most freely reveal themselves, their natures, and their training. Some polite, grimacing people we know would look very differently and act very differently if only we could see them in the dark. To be merged into the undetectable mass of a crowd is often a sort of moral dark in which viciousness, vanity, greed, and coarseness may expend their passions without much fear of discovery.

There have been fashionable teas given at which sweet guests have fairly scrambled for food. Trusting to the effacing effects produced on tea girls' memories by seeing five hundred—I beg a thousand pardons, four hundred I meant to say —visitors, many a woman has devoured her five and six plates of salad and cake.

At the door of a theatre, when seats are free or unreserved, or in a street crowd, all pressing

forward to see some passing show, gently-bred dames have been known to fight with their dimpled elbows, to kick with their daintily-booted feet, to push with all the surly, sullen resistance capable in their bodies. At church weddings ladies have been known to stand upon the cushioned seats as ruthlessly as small boys fight for a view at a circus.

It takes a most wise toleration not to judge America by popular American manners, displayed, for example, at an afternoon levee at the White House.

A woman who has run the gauntlet comes out of this fray, as the advertisements say, "slightly disfigured, but still in the ring." Her hat will have its feathers broken, and rest disreputably cocked over her left eye; the laces will be torn on her sleeves; and perhaps a shoulder seam is ripped. The gathers will be broken on her gown, and she will wear a general air that recalls, with all its funny suggestions, that wicked and comical monkey and parrot story, that, for manifest reasons, cannot be told in these sedate surroundings.

Watch half a dozen persons who are unknown to each other, trying at the same time to enter an empty car. Five out of six, and he is the "hundredth man," will push, struggle desperately to be first. In those blissful, never-to-be-forgotten days when I used to go to Europe in a linen bag, I soon learned to hold back until the great American constrictor had gulped the boat, the

railway coach, and the diligence. Then I got the best places, in order that the old Scriptural law might be fulfilled, and the first be last and the last be first.

Our streets, our sidewalks, our staircases, the floors of our public buildings are the great national cuspidor. Go into any public building, particularly in the morning, a building perhaps frequented almost exclusively by the polite, the chivalric, and the well-bred, and the stairs will be in a state to turn the stomach of an ostrich. It is not so in any other country in the world. Are our manners worse, or is it not for nothing we read in the morning paper over our coffee and rolls those affecting legends, beginning, "Hawked and spit for twenty-three years," and which are of the same realistic school, with this tender romance beginning "Baby was one solid sore."

There are, by the way, even yet refined homes, in which one may find each side of the fireplace a cuspidor, and there are still alive individuals with a Diogenes-like *naïveté* who innocently put them to the use for which the potter fashioned them.

So much has been said about the way men paw and claw over the ladies in the theatre when they rush out between the acts, and about the way women do not say "Thank you" when given a seat in a street car, that words here would be superfluous. One may remark, however, with some fear of contradiction, that the street car is not the place to finish off those details of the

toilette that are most conveniently performed with a pocket knife and a linen handkerchief. I look for opponents to this remonstrance, however.

Once, somebody called Bishop Whatley to account for using a certain word. Whately, you may remember, was an old prig, who took forty years to write a "Logic." "There is n't any such word in the English language, Bishop," protested his critic.

"Why, what 's the matter with that word?" cried his lordship. "There 's nothing the matter with that word! That 's a good word. Why, I have been using that word for forty years!"

Even so, by those whom I offend may I be reproved and conclusively vanquished.

Until recently the street cars on a certain line were decorated with panel signs that read: "Men in undershirts not admitted."

A gentleman entering such a prohibitive car, one day, read the sign aloud. "Great Scott!" said he, "what 's a fellow to do?"

It is needless to say the signs came down.

Almost every woman has had the experience of meeting midway of the street-crossing two females walking abreast, and who rudely hold the entire crossing, and even use their bodies as projectiles to push you off into the mud rather than succumb so far to your rights as to give you half the crossing.

Almost every woman has an acquaintance with some woman who bows gushingly at you in the street one day, and the next snubs you with

a rude nod and an insolent lifting of the eyebrows.

Once, in a public restaurant, I heard a lady, who could not realize that in a crowd even American queens must wait their turn, threaten to have the waiter there discharged. She shook her parasol at one of the men, and in her anger was not lovely to look on. It did not make a good effect. A rich woman, full of power, influence, and opportunities for doing good, does herself an injustice when she makes patient, honest servitors, overworked and doing their best, quake in their shoes over her temporary threats. Besides, people who did not know her, might mistake her for the head steward's wife and surely no greater misfortune could happen to a butterfly of fashion, than to be confounded with one in the working world. Anyhow, it is awfully bad manners to lose one's temper and be rude and brutal, except to one's husband and children.

Many a gentleman who is the pink of politeness in the street, leaves his "pleases" and his "thank yous," his "good mornings" and his "good nights" out of doors, nor carries them to his own home. He talks to his wife in language and tone that he would be ashamed to employ toward the porter in his store. He should learn that there are even polite ways of being rude, and that a gentleman, if he must beat his wife, will do it in a gentlemanly way.

One of the most striking illustrations of rude manners that ever I have seen, is the way in

which Madame Kettledrum can receive and snub. About her gather a halo of fashion, and at humble distances are the silly satellites who are foolish enough to play the moth for this farthing dip. They do not belong here, and they know it, but it is irresistible to come. They stand in the corners, nobody introduces them. Tea girls, who become very acute in the course of half a dozen seasons, do not trouble to offer them "cake and ale." This is the way Madame Kettledrum cancels all her obligations in that grudging card. It is honor enough to be invited here at all—even for the seats below the salt, and so they stand around forlornly. A sample of sandwiches secured on the impulse of the moment, goes to the head and they adventure a comment to the rustling, silken lady who pauses near them.

It ought to suffice—the certificate of character of implied by being under a mutual roof in a social way—but it does n't—oh, no. My lady lifts her lorgnette. Perhaps five years since she was thankful for steel spectacles—and she stolidly stares these innocent interlopers out of countenance.

A perverted interpretation of the words "polite society" renders this method of accomplishing somebody's social extinction highly popular. And yet show me the leader who does not love to drag at her chariot wheels the foolish sycophants who are grateful for being thus bound and crushed.

To "lick your platter clean" in the house of a friend is better manners than to suggestively sniff at the salad and comment to your table neighbor on the replating needed by the silver.

The elastic bit of good manners is severely tested by that egotist who persistently talks of himself all the time. Nothing is sadder than to see a really sensible person afflicted with this incurable sort of dry rot. A lady who takes up your time to tell you how successful she is, how popular she is, how sought after, has not yet acquired that excellent manner whose other name is self-repression.

An ill-mannered man is he who dares to be rude to those who dare not answer back, or who asserts his position by an insolent, patronizing air to inferiors; to those who bespeak favors and to those who are less prosperous.

A man whose manner cannot stand the test of private life had best invest anew in polite ways. He may go ungloved in his own home, the freedom there is sweet and restful, but it is no freedom to say rude things, to get into ungovernable rages, to fling phrases of reproach and insult and billingsgate at the lady who bears his name.

The other name for good manners is good morals. Half an hour later, smirking and smiling in the street, on his lips no stain of profanity, on his brow no defacing scowl, who could dream the polite Dr. Jekyll had a Mr. Hyde side of his life?

Handbooks on society tell you how to peel

oranges and help yourself to olives, and translate punctiliously the turned-down corners of a visiting card, but to harm a precious nature is deeper —and to hurt a kind heart—although some do not think so, is a sadder breach of manners than to cut your palate with your knife.

There are two decorums: one of the hand and one of the heart. It is bad form to leave an invitation card unanswered, but it is bad heart to go about and investigate first to find out who are the other guests. It is etiquette to eat with a fork, but it is good manners to mean "Thank you" when you say it. It is just that difference and no more.

A lovely manner is no more indigenous to a palace-bred person than cobwebs are to a cornstalk—although both conditions are common. Some of the gentlest-hearted men have accomplished their destinies by hovel-hearths. In the street car often the head that wears a silk hat defers only to the lady of fashion—but the blue-shirted workman vacates for the woman, not the gown or the bank account.

A pig can be fitted with a silken coat, but not with a silvery voice. The manners of a man are tested when he talks and acts, not simply when he appears.

If one would judge a gentlewoman, it is when she shines by the side of lesser stars. Good manners are not kept for company dessert with just enough to go around and none left over to send to the kitchen.

There are persons who figure in public circles, and to whose names a certain *éclat* attaches, who, after an intercourse of years with gentlefolk, remain rude, selfish, and arrogant. Something prevents the interpenetration of the essential oils that make the wheels of life run smoothly. A gentle-mannered man is never rude—never willingly hurts any one's feelings, never shames honest poverty, never humbles a simple nature.

A gentle-mannered woman is not afraid to be natural, or to be gentle to her servants, or loth to admire the beautiful possessions of other people.

It is not a crime to put a fishfork into an oyster, nor a disgrace to ask for a spoon when you would help yourself to olives. Yet a shallow pate places these vices in the calendar above all the virtues. Slander is not half so heinous as cutting lettuce with a knife.

Judge of a woman's manners by the way she treats her foe, of a man's by the way he treats his wife, of the world's by the way they behave in a crowd.

FOR COMMONPLACE WOMEN.

FOR COMMONPLACE WOMEN.

My dear Angelica, somebody asked me the other day if I did not think you a very commonplace woman.

Remembering your absolute lack of vanity, your modest demeanor and lack of egotism, your total indifference regarding which seat you occupy in the club or public meeting, your unambition to be president of anything, your contentment with accessible joys, your peaceful home and devotion there, and the way you refrain from ranting around the country to make weak speeches on subjects culled from books of statistics and encyclopædias—I answered "Delightfully so."

And now having told you so much it becomes me to say something more.

You and I know, Angelica, that there has been of late a disposition on the part of almost everybody to divide the beautiful sex into two armies of the advanced and commonplace woman, or the sheep and goats. According to the prejudices of the self-appointed critics, the term sheep and goats is an adjustable one.

It seems to me the world should, by this time,

be sick and tired of the phrase "advanced woman." It was a French empress who disgusted her whole court with the perfume of musk. I think anybody would gladly exchange this overpowering odor for the wholesome fragrance of a country garden, or even the smell of freshly turned sod in a dewy field. It is just so one turns, or at least I turn, from the forced growth of the advanced woman to the natural beauty and serene comfortableness of the commonplace woman.

In the first place the phrase "advanced woman" is really nothing but silly slang. It is applicable only to the bloomer-clad creature who smokes cigarettes, drinks whisky and water, and tells "off" stories at public dinner tables. Sometimes she sets up a new moral code for herself, whose chief tenet is that whatever is is right, and she has a lover or two, gambles on the turf, and clinches matters by running away with somebody's husband. Thank fortune, this sporadic outcome of too much money and too much pride and too much power is not generated in our wholesomer atmosphere.

A good many evil articles have taken the western ocean voyage, but as yet the woman who does is luckily contented with her old-world environment.

I suppose that if dear Miss Susan B. Anthony, who is a real sweet old maid, self-elected to a mission, should come into our neighborhood and lecture, and I should describe what she had on,

somebody would say I was poking fun at an advanced woman.

My dear, one should always poke fun at an advanced woman, and the time will never come when they are proper or appropriate or a credit to their sex.

In the first place, having described the real advanced woman, I leave it to your common sense to know if this stigma can justly be attached to such names as those of Susan B. Anthony, Julia Ward Howe, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Frances Willard.

Why, these are all old ladies, and the world has been familiar with their work and with their splendid devotion to their convictions for nearly half a century, but I do n't see any new women hustling up in great numbers to take their places when they shall be dead.

If you will have the term "advanced woman" you will find that the Bible is full of them. Miriam must have been called, by the gossips of her day and in Oriental vernacular, an advanced woman. The Queen of Sheba was a sort of a society swell, yet she too advanced on Solomon. The apocryphal Judith was certainly advanced far beyond her times, and who that has read the story of Vashti, the queen whose royal husband, after having been on a seven days' spree, ordered her to appear before the people and show her beauty, for she was fair to look upon, can doubt that she "had arrived," as the French say.

Vashti was too proud to make such an exhibi-

tion of herself, and refused to go, thus dedicating herself to the cause of a woman's right to command respect so long as she does nothing that is disreputable.

But now, Angelica, take notice that that rascally old king, when he could n't have one, took another, and the beautiful Esther became his wife.

While the so-called advanced woman means well, her example often causes irreparable mischief. Often a foolish girl goes to the theatre and is carried away by the blonde beauty of some dancing woman in pink tights. She goes home and soaks her head in cheap champagne and punishes her clean skin with complexion cream, and then imagines she has the charm of Lydia Thompson or Lottie Collins. She forgets that Lydia Thompson kicked to support her grandchildren, and with Lottie Collins it was also a question of bread and meat, and so her cheap little imitation, feeble as it is, actually casts a discredit on honest workingwomen.

The so-called advanced woman advocates a new-fangled costume in the interests of health and modesty, but by the time her idea has reached the general public it is almost certain to have been distorted into something immodest and unwomanly.

I read recently in a New York paper, how thousands of people had rushed into a restaurant called the Mashery, because a beautiful girl who is a waiter there had consented to add to the

attractions of the place by waiting on the customers in an ultra bloomer costume. It seems that four girls, equally pretty, gave up their situations rather than so exhibit themselves. The manager plaintively complained that he did not see why they refused to wear bloomers since he was sure they all had beautiful shapes.

That is just the trouble with the whole advanced woman idea. Somebody is always ready to degrade it, masquerade it, and pollute it by unholy uses.

A few moments ago, to make a side remark that has has little or nothing to do with this letter, I had to stop from this writing in order to look over a Bible for my Scriptural illustrations.

It was the Bible of a commonplace woman, and you might have known it to be such from its very aspect. Slipped in the bulging, faded pages were dried rosebuds and bits of withered myrtle taken from dear, dead hands, or closed coffin-lids, and there were newspaper clippings—bits of poetry and fine aphorisms; and there were death notices and marriage notices; and on the thin, white page between the Old and New Testaments, done in lead pencil in a wobbly handwriting, were the dates of the births of babies and the deaths of babies. And many verses were underlined, and among these I found the phrase: "She hath done what she could."

I do n't suppose that any of the so-called advanced women of this world, the women who elect to think for themselves and act for them-

selves, have any other motive in view than to do the best they can with the duty that lies before them.

This is why so many of the platform speakers, the temperance organizers, the suffrage leaders, and the missionaries are, so to speak, detached women—old maids, childless widows, or divorced wives. Behind every such woman, if she be real and sincere, you will find a personal necessity; some wrong touching her own that cries out to be righted; some injustice that justice can remedy; some quivering sorrow that can be eased by sweet sympathy; some aching hurt that can be healed by soft finger-tips.

My dear Angelica, you need no better text for all the Sunday and Monday sermons of your life than that "She hath done what she could." You need no better spur to endeavor than personal necessity, which means the duty that is before you.

Of necessity, the majority of the women of the world must come under the ban of commonplace. They must dedicate all the best years of their lives to the cruelly misnamed "commonplace" duties of the home. I dare say a lady whose mission it is to leave her family at the mercy of hired help while she travels from Maine to California lecturing on theosophy, or Browning, or social conditions in Russia, or some other equally vital subject, feels herself, and perhaps is, the mental superior of the dear little housewife who sits in the front row, drinking in

amazedly the pedantic sentences, while interiorly worrying for fear John may get home to supper before she does.

She may be your mental superior, dear Angelica, and she may be invited to more receptions, and she may get more flattering notices from the newspapers, and she may be sorry for you because you do n't belong to the International Federation of Thingumabob, but do you for one moment, suppose that her work in the world has the practical influence upon it that yours has?

Why, the very garden that surrounds your home, with its clean beds of black mold and rosebuds tipped with dew, is an incentive to good citizenship. It spurs your neighbor into a like act of thriftiness. When you spend your morning in your nursery with your little babies, training them to be sweet and true, pure and kind; to have no evil thoughts, and to speak no evil word, and to be gentle to those in the kitchen, nor to measure people by their garments or high estate, take my word for it you are doing a higher service and a costlier one than if you lectured in every capital of the universe at the expense of one cry from a neglected child or one bar-room drink in the throat of an unhomed husband.

Sometimes it happens that in organizations the members work for place rather than duty. If another member opposes their pet project they refuse to speak to her when the meeting is over.

Sometimes it happens that it is the duty, the enterprise, and the pleasure of the newspaper to write of the conventions of women reformers—those sweet saints who leave their own husbands and children to scruff for themselves in unmothered homes, while they read papers at congresses which they attend by the grace of free railroad passes. Now, invariably this advance guard of the new civilization have a human preference for those writings that are the most flattering. Very few people have the grandeur to rise superior to flattery. Very few people can discriminate that justice and the truth is of more good to the world at large than columns of personal anecdote and gush.

It is to be hoped, my dear girl, that you take your dutiful part in the church sociable; that when your turn comes you read your earnestly-prepared paper in your literary neighborhood club, and that you do your share of work at the charity entertainment; but I beg of you continue to do so for the work's sake and not for the place's sake. Do n't spoil it all by wire-pulling for a seat on the board, the first place on the platform, the picture in the newspaper. But first and foremost of all do nothing save charity that may be even remotely at the expense of the home. In fact, no matter how the world sneers be brave enough to be commonplace, if to be commonplace means anything for the comfort of the home, the self-respect of women, and the happiness of good men.

When the "advanced women" make a raid on the town they are heralded as great and noble, and as pioneers who have hewn out a path in which all their sex may walk with success; yet to my thinking not one of these women, famous as they are, has accomplished a finer service than that of any girl who stands in a store, works at a desk, or bends over a typewriter.

The truth is that women who go beyond their homes to labor do that chiefly for duty's sake, simply and finely, and care little for the prestige that attends such acts. When a hero has a life to save he does not pose, thinking of what people may say of him to-morrow. It is the same way with a woman; duty comes first and sweetens itself; the applause comes—maybe never.

At the convention how you listen to platitudes and sentences chiefly biographical, concerning some writer whose writings you may have never read, and like the youth in "Excelsior" you see through the open window the shades of night are falling fast.

You will be late for dinner. John will come home hungry, the baby will be crying, and there will be only a hired housegirl to take the place of the appointed vestal whose sworn service it is to keep alight the cheerful torch of love on the home hearth.

In this case, my dear Angelica, is not your commonplace duty paramount to the story of Margaret Fuller, or even of Racial Problems in Europe?

The women of Massachusetts refused to vote in favor of suffrage. Their chief and leader excused them, saying they were afraid of their husbands, and afraid to risk their domestic happiness. This is only another way of saying that they must be commonplace women, with no ideals above those that concern their homes.

It is true, many women will be benefited by the ballot, but it is equally true that no wife and mother would be justified in jeopardizing her domestic happiness for the sake of the experiment. In our young days, Angelica, we have perhaps known what it was to go home to dinner and find the mother absent. Can you ever forget the look of forlornity that hung over everything, like an untidy cloth? A sense of depression filled the unmothered group. No matter how gay a time she might have been having, how many laurels she was adding to her weatlh, could anything requite her for the loss suffered in that home circle? The fact that she was so deeply missed only proved her power. The wife's share of the partnership implies a constant attendance on commonplace duties, as the husband's share implies strict attention in the counting-room and at the desk. There are but two things that can excuse a wife's absence from home at meal times, and those are sickness and death.

In all the fairy world there are no sweeter elf-folks than the little brownies who go about lightening loads, tending fires, and making good cheer wherever they are. These are the real crickets

on the hearth, and I think in the fairy world and the woman world they accomplish the most good of all.

Once I staid all night in the simple log cabin of a Georgia cracker. My hostess could not spell her own name, but she kept a clean house, and she never dared to do any act unbecoming a Christian. I slept on a cot in the kitchen, and about four o'clock the cosy, homely noises of getting breakfast awakened me. The table was set for the morning meal, some squirrels were frying in a pan before the open fire, and some rye biscuit were baking in a Dutch oven. The aroma of country coffee filled the room. The mistress of this home, its brownie and its cricket, with a brush of pine twigs, was sweeping up a cheerful hearth. The morning star smiled in frostily at the uncurtained window.

Half an hour later three writing women, with the hostess and her son, sat at the homely meal. She said a simple grace over the fried meat and bones, and then, smiling at us, remarked: "I s'pose you literary ladies ain't used to such fare, but I 'm just a commonplace woman and do n't know any better."

My dear Angelica, keep your children's noses clean and their hearts happy; make your husband's home the best place on earth to him; because you are there do your duty in your church, in your club, and to the poor and sorrowful, and never be ashamed that because you are not president or "visiting delegate," people reproachfully refer to you as "a commonplace woman."

DOUDOUCE'S MOTHERS.

DOUDOUCE'S MOTHERS.

Once upon a time there lived at the core of the great city's stone heart, a little child going by the name of Doudouce. In a way she came rightly by this name, for a sweeter little body never counted the far-off stars, or more tenderly stroked a stray cat, or more blithely and winsomely smiled up into old eyes. And then, looking at it from another point of view, the fact of this name was extremely odd, for Doudouce was nothing in the world but a dear, little, round-faced Dutch baby, and for a Dutch baby, however sweet, to bear such a particularly Frenchy name was something out of the usual, to say the least.

When Doudouce first came to live in the court she was a very little morsel of humanity indeed. She wore a short-waisted blue woolen frock, some stout yarn socks that would not stay up over the ruddy apples of her knees, and on her feet a splendid pair of red shoes, and on her head a regular Dutch cap of blue knitting. Her pale, sunshiny hair was done up in two pig-tails no bigger than her own little thumbs, and tied at the ends with wisps of yarn, so that altogether she was as daintily Dutch as any blue and white

mug that ever came out of the best shop at Delft.

Besides all this, she had the lovingest ways in the world. She came at one like a little peace-maker, a dove with an olive branch, and you were safe to suspect and hate the person who could resist her. There was a pigeon that belonged to Doudouce. It came into the court and took up lodgings there, and adopted Doudouce from the very first, sleeping on the rim of her wicker crib, and generally in the day-time perching on her shoulder, patiently enduring being scrubbed in Annette's washtub, being perched on her clothes-line to dry, being put to sleep in one of Jean Marie's wooden shoes.

She had n't any mother, this poor, forlorn, foreign-looking, and demure little lassie, but her father, the basket-maker, was the beautifulest, friendliest, jolliest young fellow that ever lived. It took hard times indeed to dull his eye and still his laugh. His eyes were as blue as Doudouce's own, and his hair so flaxen fair that when he took his little Dutch baby in his arms and put her head against his head, they might have passed for one flax plant, with their four blue eyes for the blossoms.

The pair lived in a little room in the court, and in one corner there was always a pile of milk-white reeds and always the singing father down on his little bench, weaving and plaiting the rushes into cradles and baby chairs, and odd cylinders into which some babies are put to learn to

walk, and into baskets—enough, it would seem, to supply the whole world. Every morning the basketman washed and dressed and fed his baby, and he plaited her sunshiny wisps of hair in precisely the same pattern that he used in his finest willow weavings, and then, being ready, Doudouce would go out into the courtyard and shake hands for good-morning with all her neighbors.

It was a charming old court in which Doudouce lived. You may see it any day if you will turn away from the great thoroughfare and follow along a narrow street, at the end of which tiled pentroofs and stone balustrades and iron railings and odd little balconies and dormer windows and green trees and chimney tops and belfries all seem to be rushing together in such a tangle of fabric and form and color than which nothing could be more perplexing or enticing. You must go on past the noisy bird stores and the big second-hand furniture shops telling the market price of misery and misfortune, past the hotel and the printing-office, and the cathedral where the King of the Bells lives, and on for a block or two beyond the old Spanish courts, that look as if they had been in swimming in a river of cobwebs. And then the street narrows, and you come to two huge, green, wooden gates, leading into a wide, stone passage, that opens upon the courtyard. The big gates will be closed, but a little gate has been cut into the panel of one of them, and this is always open, and seeming to say "Walk in." At the end of the passage is an

arched way made of a mullioned lattice of green and gold and purple and blue glass, with a pane or two missing, and the loss considerately concealed by the busy spiders. The view shows a stained pink wall, the drooping corner of a broken balcony, the falling roof of a shed, dropping like the yellow jaw of a dead man. Under the shed, as pretty as a pomegranate, Annette stands all day long at her washtubs. She knows, as well as a peacock knows he is pretty on a stone wall, that she is pretty there in the stained glass archway, and besides she can work and look out into the street and know something of what is going on in the world. The steam rises all about her, she flirts the foamy suds, and she glimmers in and out of the mist like a wholesome brownie, the blue of her gown, the amber of her arm, and the pose of her buxom figure, all as pretty and as picturesque as one could desire.

Sometimes artists would come and make sketches of this court. In the old days, according to the oldest inhabitants, this was the fashionable bathhouse, a sort of Hammam, and the small, cell-like rooms were fitted up with white marble bathtubs, almost as thick through the sides as Doudouce's little chunky body. Now the entire place is a tenement, and the tubs stand about in the yard, where at night, in the moonlight, they gleam like the sarcophagi of giants. Doudouce is no angel, in fact she is decidedly one of those darlings who require to be equalized by being kissed at one end and spanked

at the other, and when the equalization efforts are unsatisfactory, her mothers plump her down into a pool of sunshine in one of those white coffins and leave her to catch up with repentance.

A young lady used to take tourists into this courtyard, hoping they would admire it, but somehow they seemed to take most note of the dirty gutters, and they invariably asked if it were not unhealthy; and, worst of all, they looked at Annette, and Josephine, and old Mam Aristide, and Jean Marie, and all the others, as if they were beings of another world, which was more than the young lady could stand, and so one day she vowed never again to take any tourist to see this court and its folk.

All the fine clothes, all the polish of travel, and all the arrogance and importance of money cannot cover up a true heart and a true nature. Neither can poverty crush it out or tears drown it out. And when you see a tourist, or a home body either, staring about in a fishy, bloodless sort of way at the men and women and little children you will know it for a sign that that person has not a true heart—only a something that crumbles into useless ashes under the touch of Nature.

Why, in this court it was n't so much the artistic attractions that appealed to tourists as the sense of life. It was a little village off to itself —supreme in its own intensity and simplicity, beautiful as Christ in its life and its loves, its joys and sorrows, jokes and tears, its cuttings

and contrivings, its sweet and simple humanity, its neighborly ways of love and grace. If you should ever go into this place or any other and find here some good that you have not, some divine sympathy and comprehension of hearts and needs that you cannot feel, some patient endurance that you lack, some loving way that is not your way, then will be the time to clasp hands over the ashes of your heart and cry out, "Oh, what am I? O God, for a Christmas gift send me a heart!"

A black body, a tatooed skin, a velvet gown, a gilded home—what does God think of the housing, so that the heart is there? Nay, what after all does the world think of the housing, so the heart is there? You may hide murder and theft, sin and deceit, but you cannot hide a beautiful deed. It climbs to heaven with wings that the world itself has not the will to wound.

Oh yes! life was life-like in that court. Annette at her tubs, old Mrs. Guyger at her knitting, Jean Marie carving his wooden shoes, old John cobbling patiently the wretched leather shoes that, past all cobbling, must still be mended for their owners; garrulous Lisette, with her pink pralines and red peppers, old men and old women—Youth, Fire, Ashes, Hope, and Memory—but sweetest and most human, and yet purest of all, the basketmaker's little Doudouce.

It was a warm, bright, Christmasy sort of morning. It smelled of violets, and made one

think of going to market, of seeing the yellow-sailed luggers nosing into the wharf, of looking into gay shop, or of dozing a bit on the sunny benches in the square, where the sweet olive bushes were all spiked with bloom. Doudouce came out of her room, the pigeon on her shoulders, and looked around her in a large, friendly way, as if her little heart was quite big enough to take in all the world. She was a friendly little thing, and living there amongst all her mothers —for every petticoated creature in the court, black, white or brown, considered herself in that light to the child—Doudouce had never learned that there are persons who do not love little children. I have seen an ugly lady stare at a little baby as if she would freeze it. I have seen hard eyes that do not soften, and know hard hearts that would not warm at the sound of little children crying in the street, and I know that somewhere, where the sunlight is not, where peace is not, there are women who are heedless of the needs of children—women who do not know how sweet is the longing that can only be satisfied by gathering a little child up in your arms to kiss the wet mouth, and thrill with the caress of the baby hand "seeking the land where all the sweets are his."

Yes, every woman in the court was her worshiping mother. Once, when times were so hard that even the basket-maker failed to laugh, and found it difficult to manage the mug of milk and loaf of bread that fed Doudouce, he had said

something about putting the little one in the asylum. Things even went so far that two beautiful-faced Sisters of Charity came to visit the wondering-eyed Dutch baby. They wore blue gowns and wonderful caps, like white wings flapping on their heads, and Doudouce thought they were the white pigeon's mammas. But take her away! Bless you the governor himself could not have done that. The whole place was up in arms, and they ran with the child from one room to another, in a disgraceful way, as if the sisters had been ogresses, and finally hid her away in one of the bathtub coffins, clapping boards across the top, so that even the little round, blue head of her could not be seen. Oh, the beautiful way that some women have with a little child!—how sweet it is! And oh, the tender sympathy of the poor for each other!—how divine it is!

Doudouce in a palace could not have set her small feet upon the necks of royalty more wilfully than did Doudouce, down in the old tenement court by the cathedral, set her feet upon the necks of her mothers. She ran from one to the other swift as a shuttle, and so she knit herself into the strong and tender hearts beating under the second-hand gowns and coarse skirts and rusty coats, and the tinsel of cast-off, faded finery. She was the thread of gold meshed into the somber fabric of life along with the yellow-eyed musk plant and the shabby pop-bird in his shabby cage, the courtyard's cat, and the pigeon.

These mothers looked after her clothes and

her little, fair body; and if sometimes one discovered her untended in any way or apparently neglected, they clucked over her like so many hens, and reproached each other as if a crime had been done. One day she got lost, and the commotion was terrible until they found her, in Jean Marie's room, snuggled down in his poor pallet fast asleep, the half-suffocated pigeon palpitating on her true little heart. Did they waken her? Not a bit of it. But, one after the other, as if it were at a Christmas midnight mass, they tiptoed in and out of that little sanctuary, smiling down on her with hearts almost breaking for love of her.

It was a joyous morning. The dormer windows up on the steep, tiled roof, peered down, like old gray monks in their cowls, to regard Doudouce. Every porch and piazza sent her its greeting, and here, there, and everywhere, it was "Hey, Doudouce!" and "Bo' jour, ma p'tite," and "How you vas, mine little friend?" and "The top o' the marnin' to yees, me darlint!" But Doudouce only smiled around and up and down in that large, loving way of hers, and scuffled her little wooden shoes—for the red ones had been worn out a six months—one against the other.

Everything and everybody seemed busy. What a litter of work the old sun lightened and brightened as he looked down upon the court. How he illumined the thin, blue smoke, curling up from the small charcoal furnaces setting

about here and there on the purple flags. How good the coffee smelled, and how busy was every one, coming and going, chopping kindling and sweeping floors, and peeling potatoes and rubbing clothes on the shining tin washboards. A market basket stood on a window ledge, and the courtyard cat unmolestedly crawled over the carrots in search of the meat. A posy of sweet olive and sweet violets lay in a half finished wooden shoe by Jean Marie's side. If a Tourist would not have been satisfied with this he would not have been satisfied with anything. Already Madame Claire, who never does anything else, was hanging over her bit of the balcony, laughing and gassing with the busy workers below and taking a stitch in her embroidery. She takes one a day, like a pill, so the others say. Already Josephine, who looks as if she had been dipped in a pot of wrinkles, was at her board by her door, scouring away at the second-hand clothing for her little shop by the market. Already Madelon, the very king, queen, and all the royal family of lace-curtain laundresses, has pinned a pair into her drying-frame, and she stood, her big-ringed fingers sprawling like yellow caterpillars over her ample hips, her head thrown back, her hoop earrings flashing in the sunlight, while she shouted up to Mam Aristide—leaning from one of the dormers—a descriptive history of houses and families to which the fine curtains belong.

Doudouce said nothing at all, but marched

solemnly across the purple flagstones to the sunless corner where Francini is about to set forth with his platter of wares. It was a wonderful platter, holding sturdy, brown Kris Kringles, with fat stomachs and big beards powdered over with snow, bearing in their arms tiny little Christmas trees, flowered with waxen tapers and gilt beads, or a string of shimmering silvery tinsel like one of Doudouce's flaxen hairs; with little wooden sheep never known in natural history; with speckled dogs on a sloping platform that squeaked if you pressed them in the fattest part; with angels with wings and Madonnas with babies.

Did you ever hear any stories of dolls and images that can talk and feel when all the rest of the world is dumb in sleep? Did you ever hear of any beautiful statue who ran away at dusk from her pedestal and was back there very sleepy and dull, but not at all repentant, by daylight of the next morning? Did you ever hear of any sweet saint who lived up in a shrine all day, but who came down at night and was just a woman? Did you ever read the story of the little "Tin Soldier?" And do you not wish to believe those stories; and do you not believe them? If you do not, why then you are a Tourist, and my court is unhealthy so run away; and a good day to you forever.

God loves to smile at us. He is not always thinking on our petty peccadilloes. He made us just so, and He is so patient over us, over our frivolities and weaknesses and vanities and our

humanities. When he frowns it is because He finds us without a heart, with no place to hold the divine tenderness with which His Own cried out "Suffer little children to come unto me." O God, for a Christmas present send me a heart! Let it ache, let it throb, let it break in the end if Thou will it so; but send me a heart that I may learn the mystery and the wonder of all this working world.

Doudouce believed firmly in the humanity and virility of Francini's images. With her their daytime woodenness was only so many cases of suspended animation. They were different from her, but gentle Jesus made them. They had a place in the world, they had feelings, and were cold, or sorry, or uncomfortable, or happy, just as she might be.

I know a little Doudouce who can't go to sleep at night if her dolls are uncovered and crowded. And oh, heaven help the world! I know women and men who never have heard that there are little children crying in the streets, who have never seen tears, nor desolation, nor misery, who do not care that there are unlit hearths on Christmas night!

Slowly she passed from one to the other, holding her bit of sweet roll to their wooden lips, and shyly shielding the act with her hand, for in a baby, inexplicable way she could not bear that Annette and Josephine and Francini should see that the images only pretended to eat. It was a friendly act, concealing a foible with a loyalty

that was royal. Where would they go? Would they come back at night? To whom would the angels, with drooping wings and sad faces go? And the white mothers, to whom would they carry the babies? Into what rooms would the brown Kris Kringles go with fairy gifts. With a passion of interest Doudouce pondered these things, like Mary, in her heart.

But, God bless you, all the court saw her! Saw the little pigeon-crested shoulder hunch up; saw the sly offering of food—the swift, sweet alms! And the court clucked like a barnyard of laying hens, and looked with comprehending motherly love melting in their eyes, melting the wrinkles away, one at the other. Doudouce followed Francini to the green gates, and somehow her heart was like lead. She felt in her that none of the images would ever come back again.

It was late when Francini came home that night; late, but the old plaster-of-paris image dealer carried his board under his arm. All were gone—all; and for the little Dutch baby waiting for him by the big stone coffin of a bath-tub it was like the ending of a life. Every day for weeks they had been coming and going, those images, and she had fed them, and whispered things to them, and every night she had waited for them, and sorrowed when one was missing.

They kissed her good-night—the mothers did; kissed the little red lips that were like tremulous rose petals, and held her for a moment against their rough cotton or serge breasts, and said

"There! there!" as only Love the good angel, Love the Madonna, can say it to Child, or Friend, or Lover, and then the basket man undressed his Dutch baby, Doudouce, and put her to sleep in her willow bed, with the pigeon pluming on the hood.

So you think her mothers did not know what was wrong with Doudouce? Well, what a Tourist from New York you must be! Can any heart hide a sorrow so deep that Love will not see it? Something had gone out of her life, and they would have given worlds to bring it back. Did you never have the heartache when Doudouce lost her Kris Kringle? Did you never have the heartache when Doudouce lost the first sweet bloom of her absolute faith in you? Of your infallibility, your invulnerable strength and power? It was just as heart-breaking in the court for Doudouce's fairies and angels were all gone away into other homes.

The stars looked down upon the court, upon the oddest jumble of heads that ever were put together. Annette in her green-and-gold turban, Josephine in her ragged lace cap, Madelon with her barbaric gleams of gold at the oval of her face, Mam Aristide a fantasy of grisly gray curls and purple ribbons, the cowl-like cap of Francini, the silken pate of Jean Marie—all bunched together like spring and summer and autumn and winter flowers. Burly figures and slim figures, and trembling old bodies and buxom, healthful ones; a clinking of thin, small

coins; a whispering and a chuckling, a pleasant bustling murmur, a joyous, spontaneous activity. What a running back and forth there was through the little green gate to the gay little shop in the next street; what a crackling of paper and a folding and an unfolding and a wrapping up! The pigeon ruffled up like a mad little turkey-cock over being disturbed. Even Doudouce stirred in her willow crib, and as she did so half a dozen forms crouched lower than the baby's vision, like so many burglars. If Doudouce had not lived day in and day out like a chick in a barnyard the clucking and chirruping would have awakened her, but the voice of Love and the touch of Love do not disturb us. It gives us our sweetest repose. It soothes into inexpressible calm.

And by and by the white moon came and looked into all the windows on the sleeping forms and stilled, patient faces. On some were tears, and on every mouth was a little fleeting dream-smile. The moon kissed them all—the old, thin lip, the mouth smelling of tobacco, the sad mouth, the coarse one, the commonplace one—and passed on, filling the stone coffins under the patched steps full of white pools of light. She looked in at the basket-maker's room, on Jans asleep, on the white pigeon, like an angel, as if God, perhaps, had let the dead mother come in this shape to guard her baby; on dainty, demure, Dutch Doudouce, sleeping there. And the moon saw Kris Kringle with his tree, his

tapers all alight, his tinsel all a-quiver. She saw a toy wooden washtub and a tiny board and a little waterbucket, a little wooden cupboard and a lot of wooden dishes; a doll—a big blue-eyed doll—naked to be sure, save for a string of beads around her neck; a pile of firecrackers, a cornucopia filled with candies, a tiny doll's pair of wooden shoes, a dusting pan and brush that a fairy might use. And then the moon ran away, and she sat up in the pale skies like a great white queen on her throne, and the night wind breathed upon the far-off stars until one by one they faded away.

I think the moon-queen sent a message across the wan skies, for after a time the old sun looked down into the court where the moon had been, and he touched Doudouce so that she opened her eyes upon the glory of the Christmas morning.

SIMPLE LIVING.

SIMPLE LIVING.

There are men who go through life acquiring theories, philosophies, and isms, and there are others who go through life acquiring experience.

Are you not certain that the sweetest sweetness and the saddest sadness comes to that one who lives, loves, learns, sorrows, is happy, and who suffers?

Once on a time there came up to the city a minister from a country town, and he was to take charge of a fashionable church whose regular pastor received in wages, to say nothing of perquisites, the handsome salary of $5000 a year.

I need hardly add that it was summer time, and the regular incumbent was off on his luxurious vacation.

Sick? Oh, dear no! To the contrary—as fat as a—well—well, fat enough to make the mouth of a cannibal water!

Now, if you were to press me I am sure I could not give you any reason why that rich clergyman, living in an elegant home, with drawing rooms in which he entertained the great, and a wide hall where the poor were bidden to wait while the pampered menial went to see if his holiness would receive them, needed to go away

from home in the summer time any more than the least and most faithful of his flock. I have inquired, and up to date I have not been able to find out, that when on earth our Lord and Saviour patronized any particular summer resort, or that during the heat and burden of the day He went off into the shade to rest, leaving the work and worry to the humbler laborers.

But since those times, times have changed. Fisherman are no longer the fashion, and if Christ came on earth to-day without credentials, He would, indeed, have no place wherein to lay His head.

To-day the rich clergyman arranges for his summer tour as a matter of course. He draws a fine salary and can afford the rest, and while away he secures the services of some country clergyman who is glad to earn the fabulous sum of one hundred dollars a month. The regular rector claims that he is obliged to go away to secure rest after his intense mental struggle, because he is now suffering from the consequent mental exhaustion. I suppose that comes from preaching. Well, would not his congregation be justified in asking for a similar leave of absence and for the same cause, due to listening to the dearly-beloved brother's sermons?

Of course I know my ideas are old-fashioned, and out of date, but dear reader, are all the old-fashioned people dead?

Are there not still in existence men and women who believe that their own duty and respon-

sibility are untransferable and that the burden on their shoulders cannot be shifted to other shoulders, however willing?

And now let us get back to my country parson. One day he wrote home to his dear, good, old-fashioned wife, who had never worn anything better than an alpaca gown, and who was in the habit of sitting up with the parish dead, decking the parish brides, and mourning with the parish afflicted, a letter like this:

My Dear Polly—I wish you were here. [Now is n't that just like a man—the minute he gets into hot water or into trouble or is homesick he calls on his women folk to comfort him and get him out of his doldrums?] I sleep in the rector's house and go to Mrs. T.'s for my meals. On Sundays there is a very pitiful congregation, and most of these are poor and discontented and are trying to live on less money than is the gas bill for this gorgeous house. Every day I visit some one who is sick and some one who is sad, and often, Polly, I see such signs of poverty that I am compelled to leave a little bit of change casually on the hall table. I think the shy poor who cling on to our fashionable churches must suffer the worst of all, because, between you and me, Polly, they get awfully snubbed by the leading members. Polly, I am homesick. It is true that many of the leading members are out of town, but, nevertheless, I do n't feel at my ease with ladies who require you to seesaw your hand up in the air when they say "Good morning,"

[illegible] what you get to see them. Upset you [illegible] plans and why warm to take a [illegible]m. They seem to think it not [illegible] flowers on the altar that is [illegible] the suffering and the needy. They as[illegible] [illegible] Mrs. Bramble's tea, and when [illegible] Mrs. Bramble's breakfast is hour[illegible] [illegible]ionalism, which has struck society. [illegible] are disturbed to know whether the [illegible] fad of the moment is to be pessim[illegible] or some other ism. Polly, that [illegible] just where God reached Sherrytown.

[illegible] the other day I ventured to call a meet[illegible] [illegible] church ladies. Between you and me, [illegible] [illegible] churches in this town are almost en[illegible] by ladies. As Tom says, what they say goes. The ministers stand in absolute fear of them. Of course, dear Polly, I mean the rich women. They run the rich churches. If a measure is proposed that they don't like, why they say flatly if it is adopted they will resign; and as they pay most of the expenses of the church, you can easily see that they—that is, the rich ones—must be deferred to, and that nothing is done to displease them. But the other day when I had my meeting, I can assure you I longed for your clear judgment and your honest, outspoken way. I divided the ladies up into summer work, just as we do at home. Some were to visit the sick, some were to look after the old people, and some were to visit the new members of the church.

Well, Polly, I thought I had divided it off all

right; but what do you think? When I came to the Committee for Visiting the New-comers in the Church, the fashionable lady whom I had, as a sort of compliment, placed at the head of that committee, stood up and said she would rather not. And why? My dear Polly, you and I, who live hand in glove with all our people, and to whom one is just the same as another, can never appreciate the motive and the prejudice of this great lady. I am almost ashamed to tell it to you. It was that she was afraid the people whom she visited might use her name as a stepping-stone to get into society.

Polly, dear, do you think snobbery and foolishness could go any farther than that? I am heart-sick, humiliated, and ashamed. I have preached the dear Lord as you and I think on Him, and it seems these people do not know Him at all.

One Sunday I told, as I might have told the story of one of our dear baby boys, the story of the little Infant Child, whose innocence brought to His feet the wise men of the world; and the next week I pictured Him as the inspired youth, clean and pure and seeing heaven only, and then after that I showed, just as you and I know Him, Polly dear, the ripe-minded man, teaching His mission of love inextinguishable and mercy illimitable. And then, Polly, do n't you know, came the prayer for all the sins of the world, the story of the One dying on His Cross, and yet in all His agony and sorrow finding time to

beg forgiveness for those who suffered at His side.

Dear heart, I have found out that the Rev. So-and-so's congregation do n't want their Christianity plain so, any more than they like plain beef and mutton. They want soufflés, and à la modes, and the more philosophic and metaphysical I make my discourses the better I please the congregation.

The other night I was invited to an ultra fashionable gathering, where I was told it would be to my advantage to be seen. I could not go because I had no dress suit, and in this town the livery of the Lord, to be acceptable, my dear girl, must be embroidered with white ties and immaculate cassocks. At that reunion, I am told, they discussed all the popular isms. It is well I was not there. I do n't know anything at all about isms. I only know that it is good to love the men and women who live around you; that it is good to love the clean sky and the growing trees, and the sweet smelling earth; that it is good to love the sorrowful workers, dying in their tracks, and the worn-out ones, drooping in the death furrows; and that to be glad with the glad, and sad with the sad, is what God meant when He planted compassion in our hearts.

Polly, what is pessimism? What is optimism? What is hypnotism? Every day I hear these terms, and the ladies and gentlemen whom I meet—especially the ladies—seem to think the understanding of these isms is of far more impor-

tance than the gospel of that dear, unfashionable, barefooted, simple-coated Christ, who was not ashamed to be poor, and who was not to be coaxed by the splendor of a fine house and a fine habit. The other day one of the vestry came to me and whispered that it would be a good card for the church if I began to give a series of lectures on Browning. "You see," said he, "Shakespeare is all the go in So-and-so's church, and we think you know just as much about Browning as the next."

Now Polly, what do you think of that? Am I here to teach Browning or Christ? Is my mission to give the interpretation of the poet of the moment, or am I here to tell, as best I can, the message of that divine Saviour, who said "Believe on Me and you shall have life eternal?" Am I here to prance around opera-boxes and to hand cups of tea and to make small talk at swell receptions; or am I here to tell men and women that Christ is dead, and yet is alive for them? Polly, Polly, come to me quick or I shall, being weak, part my hair in the middle and take to quoting Shakespeare instead of the Bible, and I may even forget that there are any of God's chosen who do not live in brown stone fronts and keep up reception days.

I said something about hypnotism. This entire town is hypnotized. They are under the thrall of something that you and I would call "Society." Any itinerant of literary wares who comes along and who knows less about

literature than any one of our professors, is made the subject of our adulation and the repository of our dollars. Mrs. So-and-so gets up a series of discourses on the big toe of Chaucer, and Mrs. Tother-and-which goes her one better —my dear Polly, I got that from Tom—by giving a series of conversaziones on the vital subject of Ibsen considered as a moralist or an immoralist.

These people are hypnotized by clothes. The women think on nothing but new gowns. They desire to be placarded in the public print as wearing the newest styles and the most becoming cuts.

They are hypnotized by vanity. They want to be published as the most beautiful, the most progressive, the most charitable, and even the most pious. The other day there came to me a letter which disturbed me greatly because it convinced me that the church has become in some sense a commodity, and that its blessings are a matter of bargain and sale. The letter is as follows:

"On a certain Sunday not long ago a certain little church held an anniversary meeting. Of course it was well attended—not by its members only, but by many of their friends, not members of the congregation and yet interested in what was promised as a programme. So far as the first part of the meeting is concerned, all went as might have been presumed and in keeping with the object of the meeting. But the end!

The only thing that it can be compared to is a public auction. From the pulpit it was then announced that the object of the meeting was to get money, and the auctioneer in charge began to harangue the congregation, calling loudly for contributions, naming each donor and his contribution, and lauding him for his liberality, and so pitting one donor against the other in exactly the way an auctioneer plays one bidder against the other; in fine, doing all he possibly could to warm his hearers up to a giving point by a species of excitement whose only effect could be to rouse their envy and false pride, and impel them to give, even although their gift was far beyond what they could afford.

"All this happened in a church dedicated to Christ and was done for the ostensible purpose of furthering the cause of Christ. In the cause of Him who said: 'Woe unto you Pharisees, for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues and greetings in the markets.' Who said: 'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased.' Who said: 'Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them; otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven. Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.' Is there any need

to quote further? Is it not strange, beyond comprehension, that those professing Christianity should so forget, not the spirit alone, but the very words of Christ?

"One thing more. I have a little girl who is fond of going to Sunday-school, and whose going I always encourage. But I must regularly give her a nickel for Sunday-school collection, or she goes reluctantly, and often tearfully, because if she fails to bring it her teacher notes it, blames her for neglect, and by word or action, hurts her feelings; in plain words, destroys the sweet feeling of peace and restful love which should fill each little heart in the house of Him who said: 'Suffer little children and forbid them not to come unto Me.'

"It is just such things as these which make thinking men and women—thinking, honest Christians—wonder what some of the so-called Christian churches of to-day are coming to."

"My dear girl, what can a simple country clergyman have to say in answer to a letter like that?

"Is there a religion for the fields and one for the streets? Is there a God for the town and another for the country? Dear Polly, we live in a cottage, and one of our parishioners lives in a twenty-roomed plantation mansion, and next door to her lives a little widow who has only the proceeds of five acres, but do you think God makes any difference betwixt us three?

"Do you think He is the more pleased over the rich man, bulldozed into giving the highest

amount, than He is over the modest member who shyly slips his fifty cents into the contribution box?"

And here he ended the letter. The sermon of the letter brings me back to the question at the beginning of this, Who knows the most of life—the man of theories or the man of experience?

Once upon a time we were in a railroad accident. It was something terrible. Women were mangled and men crushed. But to this day I know that the tidings "a railroad wreck" means more to me than it could have meant before that awful day.

Oh, dear heart, love, even when least, should make us kind; sorrow, even when unrelieved, should sweeten us; and just the mere breathing of the self-same air, the mere touch of nature, the salt of tears, and the mutual sunshine of laughter should teach us all that life is only worth living when it is frank and true and that the best Christianity is that which preaches the Divine doctrine of mutual love, and better than that, mutual forbearance.

SOCIAL SUCCESS.

SOCIAL SUCCESS.

My Dear Veneeria: A little letter from you lies on my desk and I have been admiring the delicate, high-bred chirography, the refined, unostentatious paper, the clear, honest black ink, as the earmarks of a woman of the best class. I was, therefore, a little amazed, when I came to read it, to find, after the usual preliminaries, that the gist of your note, with its mysterious, yet familiar signature, "Veneeria"—for this is not the first letter I have had from you—should be:

"I should love dearly to become what is unjustly called 'a society woman.' How shall I go about it, or is it one of the impossibilities? Do n't laugh at this as a foolish vanity, for I have carefully considered and I believe it to be of real value to a woman to be in the swim."

To desire to belong to the best is, after all, only a phase of the deep, religious sentiment that God has planted in every one. It is no small or petty ambition that creates in a man or woman the wish to improve their social station, to seek higher amusements, decenter company, attain a more refined behavior. I heard a recently fin-

ished *grande dame* criticise a certain family because they aimed to be leaders in her little social set, and it transpired that the sum total of their offense lay in the fact that their immediate ancestors had been butchers and bakers and candlestickmakers. It seems to me that the shame comes in only when the family dwindles and detoriates, not when it expands, grows, and beautifies.

A fashionable lady, who is the granddaughter of a milk-peddler, who gave honest measure and had no pumps, honors her beginnings when she is gentle, polite, and willing to make room for the daughters of other milk-peddlers and bakers, but she becomes an insult to good society when she puts up her lorgnette and goes about asking: "Who are the So-and-sos, and can we afford to visit them?" Not very long ago a certain well-to-do family, owning a beautiful house, enriched with many carefully-bought souvenirs of travel, undertook to extend the hospitality of their home to the people amongst whom they lived. Their invitation-cards announcing the debut of their daughter, really meant "Let us be friends; our tastes are similar; our education is similar; we live near each other, and from each other can give and take. Therefore, let us be friends." But the old inhabitants frowned on these newcomers. They held confabs and formed a cabal. "We wo n't go," said these self-appointed arbiters, "and what is more, we won't let anybody else go." The result was that an innocent and

lovely woman was put to scorn and suffered such agonies of humiliation as, I am sorry to say, only one woman or many women can inflict on one of their own sex. That social flight was as great a failure as any flying machine yet invented.

This was a cruel revenge, and the people who planned it could not have been of the best society, although they may be in it. Society is like a religion. Its tenets are all right, its teachings are beautiful, its beliefs lovely, but among its advocates are many who are shams, who find themselves more important than their God, and who trick out their religion with a despicable travesty of pretension and false holiness. If a ragged Saviour came on earth again, even the bishop would request credentials before he ushered him to the chancel.

There is a social law of gravitation largely responsible for the place we fill in life. Just as an apple fell for Newton's fame, so we naturally gravitate to the place that demands our talent, our tastes, and turn of mind, our condition. See in every community how the so-called cranks collect to each other like a bunch of crystals. The crank of to-day is almost always the lion of to-morrow. See how the advanced thinkers hang together; how Bohemians go in cliques, how society is loyal only to society people. Sometimes an alien creeps in and has a temporary vogue; but when they are done with her they formulate one vast, substantial heel to send her back to the honesty, the sincerity, the sobriety, the high-

thinking and high-talking, the noble principles from which she had been so long an exile.

It is the old story of the old law of gravitation. We must go where we belong.

It has always been my fond belief that any person has the right in a democratic country to call his or her social set society. Each social set dominates a few, and the more publicity given to its acts, the wider its influences, the larger its circles, and the more important it becomes. In every community, judging by the newspapers, we find that society is devoted to dinner parties, to teas, to receptions, and cotillons. If your name figures at this sort of function, you are all right, and it is of more social value than if you were made president of the Philanthrophic Union, the Art Union, the Literary Union, the Reform Union. But why should not Mrs. Jones-Smith, who gives a grand anniversary dinner to the other Smith-Joneses, call her set "society"? At the Smith-Joneses you find those nondescript ladies who wear wonderful frizzled fronts bought at the hair store, and long streamers of expensive ribbons tacked on to the back of their bodices. At the Smith-Joneses you find those nondescript gentlemen who mutter jokes from last year's almanacs when they are not telling you how much they paid for their wines. You also find at the Smith-Joneses those tiresome infant phenomenons, whose clothes dimly suggest pantelettes, whose locks are always just out of curl papers, and who are in a chronic state of reciting

the "Burial of Sir John Moore," or of "executing" the "Maiden's Prayer," a musical composition that has more vitality than a cat.

But the Smith-Joneses have quite as much right to consider themselves a social function as has Mrs. Knickerbocker, whose extensive visiting list comprises less than a hundred names, and those, when attending one of her parties, stand around in stained-glass attitudes and emit platitudes about the other party they attended "larst" week at the Van Twillers, where they met each other.

And, for the life of me, I do not see any vast mental or moral difference between the almanac jokes and the "Burial of Sir John Moore," at the Smith-Joneses and the conversational dilutions that are poured thinly over the sleepy assembly of bony dames at the Knickerbockers. An evening at home with an eclectic few may be worth it all, but none the less, we may not overlook the suggestion in the statement that to be in the swim is of real value to a woman.

I wonder if any one of us should venture to introduce a brilliant, brainy blacksmith, or an intellectual shoemaker, such as the father of John Stuart Mill, into either of these social sets, what would be the result? Which would be the first set to turn the cold shoulder on a thinker who dared to think after six p.m., without a dress coat? After all, is there any society superior to clothes? Are there many persons secure enough in their place to be loyal to the man or the woman, not

the bonnet or the income? Has genius any social value before it attains an intrinsic value?

Brains are not the absolute requirement for getting on in society, for in that event we should meet there a majority of our scholars and thinkers. Heart cannot be the essential virtue, else why should so many of our most honest philanthropists be so socially neglected and unthought of in connection with society high teas and "Tuesdays in June?" Bravery is not the key-note, else we should be issuing cards in honor of some of the many gallant life-savers who add, by their deeds of valor, a new lustre to the glory of our town. Even money is not the touchstone, since even more than one good and rich woman languishes outside the sacred gates.

What, then, is the social force? What is it one must do to acquire a niche in that admirable set of ladies and gentlemen whom the world tacitly acknowledges to be society, and desirable to know and to mingle with?

Now, the answer is easy. One must acknowledge all the invitations and, at the start of one's career, accept all invitations. It is not necessary to be rich, to be well-born, or even well-bred, to have brains, or money, or wit; it is only necessary to be complacent, to flatter, to go wherever one is bid, to see that one's name figures always in the society reports, and that whatever one does is published abroad.

If Veneeria wishes to get on in the world, in a social way, she must hold as sacred her bids to

teas, and pay all her social debts with a scrupulousity she might even deny her baker, and in time she must "entertain" herself.

The social aspirant cannot do better than give people good things to eat. Society may be accused of having no brain, no soul, no intellectual appetite, but no man ever breathed, so dense as to accuse it of having no stomach. The best way to the heart of society is for the social fisher to bait for it with real home-made chicken salad and first-class "Sec" champagne. The ambitious novitiate must give something for its egg-shell nothing.

Not long since, in the beautiful drawing-room of a novice, I heard an old bird complain that the entertainment was a swindle because the intellectual menu that had been promised had fallen short. It is only when one attains the holy of holies that one can afford to be dull, cheap, and commonplace, to offer a mild pap of poetry and prose for the mental food and a milder pap of cheap sherry and angel cake for the stomach.

"How shall I conduct myself to become a society woman," asks Veneeria.

Already have I advised: pay every call, go everywhere you are bid, appear regularly in the social records, and then weed out. Every month, as if your visiting list were a garden, weed out the names you had foolishly regarded as flowers. "What is that thing growing in the corner?" asked a gardener of a lady the other day. "Oh, a beautiful golden flame-like

flower, that is gorgeous in the autumn," she answered.

"It is nothing but a weed—a weed that will flower anywhere and everywhere," reproves the gardener. "It may even beautify a ditch."

"What a pity," cries my lady Newrich; and straightway she eliminates from her yard even a spear of the goldenrod that had filled her vases before she could afford Brabant buds. It is even so many an only friend stands by and sees herself set aside because her friend, growing fashionable, no longer needs this old stanch prop and standby.

Nothing is more valuable to a society woman than the ability to cast her skin. It hurts, I admit, but they say it hurts a snake to shed its skin, or a doodle-bug to cast its coat, and one must be very callous indeed to give up wantonly an old friend. But this is necessary in society.

Veneeria says: "I have carefully considered and believe it to be of value to a woman to be in the swim." When I first read that I laughed to myself and thought how I should scorch Veneeria when I came to deal with that paragraph in her note. But I find she is right. Is there a charity to be patronized—whose name is so valuable as the society woman's? Is there a reference required—whose name is so desirable as the one that figures interminably in the society columns? An ambitious artist wants fame—to whom does he dedicate his work? To the friend of his hearth, the believer in his genius? No, to the frivolous, vain, greedy goddess, who poses on a social

pedestal and who may mention the artist's name as a reflex to her own grandeur, and a publication of the fact that to her even the terrapins do cry aloud.

The popular idea of society is best expressed as a place at which women congregate to show their new gowns, to recite, to sing their new songs, to read their latest rhymes, and to drink cocoa and eat the soufflé off of strawberries. Persons talk vaguely to each other at these functions, and exchange a sort of twaddle that passes for conversation, but they have the joy of snubbing the hangers-on, those dependents who get into the reports as being among "the many others."

It is not an ignoble ambition to desire to belong to this sort of society. Its women are good, and, according to their means, generous. They welcome, as a sick prisoner, a breath of air, the advent of an original mind, that says something and stirs their brains into thought. They really enjoy the mental friction engendered by being taken out of the cloying sweets of their mutual admiration state. It is tiresome to smile all the time, and the contrast of an alert countenance is at once an inspiration and a luxury. Society requires complacency, compliments, and receipted bills for invitations and visits, and that is all.

Dear Veneeria, if you have much time at your disposal, good gowns, a good cook, and an indulgent husband, be a society woman. Begin, if

you can do no better, by hanging on to somebody's social skirts; flatter and fawn and send her cakes to help out her feasts or flowers to decorate her rooms. It all helps. Be there also in evidence, and see that your name is in the papers. Patronize some genius; recite some social high cockalorum's poems; toady to the great Pooh Bah of the moment, and then know when to let go of the genius, snub the snob, and discard the protegée.

A fashionable lady, whom I know rents herself out to the *nouveau riche*. She announces herself the guest for six weeks of this or that lady and her hostess gives teas, lunches, and dinners, until she herself is floated. Society laughs, but it goes, and in time the new-comer conquers and joins the list of those who wear lorgnettes and who affect the query, "Ought we to visit her?"

It only takes time to teach us to praise that which we once quizzed and condemned.

What new bonnet, what triumph of invitation-card, what *éclat* of leading a german equals the being first in some gathering where brains lead bonnets, and where the ability to think is ranked as high as the ability to acquire the last fad in handshaking.

Just try it yourself, dear. Invite the frivolous lady whose head has been turned by associating with the Van Twillers to meet your intellectual shoemaker, or your thoughtful cashier, who adds up dollars and cents six days out of the

seven in a millinery shop. It won't do. Society has a tape measure requiring so much lace, so many teas, and so many fashionable names.

For that world where hearts and brains are gods, there is no name but Demos, and that is not fashionable. Renew your visiting-cards, pay visit after visit, shed old acquaintances whenever it is necessary, give gifts to the rich, dedicate books to the great, send souvenirs to the successful, and you will end by being the quoted one, the one toadied to, the very flower lauded by all the sycophants who first predicted your failure and then applauded your success.

NARROW LIVES.

NARROW LIVES.

The breath of a rose is often the bridge by which thought crosses back into an old, distant past that was all sweet with roses. The smell of a jasmine flower will make any wanderer from this fair French town of ours long for the sight of her blue skies and her leafy colonnades of oaks and magnolias.

This morning, on the way home from market, and some "God-be-merciful-to-me" prayers at a dusky, remote, ill-lighted altar, I discovered Wallace leaning over a tiny fruit-stand, fingering the small and vividly yellow oranges. I stopped, as a matter of course, because the orange that is of the royal jonquil yellow, fine of texture and thin as the skin of a russet apple, has irresistible attractions. It was a pretty little stall, with rows of apples that looked alien to any country orchard, with globes of pink-skinned winter onions and elongated pyramids of bananas, and, above all, rows upon rows of yellow oranges with Sicily in their cheeks and the breath of the summer Mediterranean distilling from their thin skins.

"Such an orange," said Wallace, "makes me think on Lenten days and the sweet and sober

ceremonies of the church, on monotonous chants from which, with some vague sense of propriety, all tune and melody have been religiously eliminated. It carries me back to a dull little country town, and the ten o'clock service in the little town church, during years when Lent came late in the season. I remember that church, with its brick walls, its beautiful raftered ceiling of oak and red cedar, the high-backed, narrow pews, the long lancet windows revealing, in wedges, pictures of the April sky and greening trees. I can hear the crooning of thrifty bees; I can see my young mother at the organ, and hear the little snap with which she pulled the ivory stops marked diapason and flute. I remember the dutiful, decorous behavior of every one—and then the walk home, with a stop at the fruit shop in Dutch Row, where, for a silver three-penny bit, I bought just such a bright, round, thin-skinned scented orange as this."

He sniffed at the fruit in his hand, and went on: "It was a peaceful life; a good beginning at life for any child—the best beginning—and yet it was a narrow life. The men and women who lived in that little town had but a narrow and small gamut of experience. I remember my young mother at that organ; yet the narrow life of a good woman is very sweet. It is like the breath of an old-fashioned rose, the hue on a primrose, or a speckled four-o'-clock. I think, however, dear lady, I am glad fate pushed me out of that country town into the deep waters

of the great world; where I have starved for lack of food; where I have wept by a gravestone; where I have cursed by the whited sepulcher of a hard man's heart; where I have learned to laugh at comedy, weep at tragedy, and sneer at hypocrisy; where, in short, I have learned how to tell and to recognize the smell of this little Sicilian orange, whose odor carries me back to the simple, one-stringed life in that far-off country town."

We were walking slowly along a broad street and turned in presently at a beautiful park, where fountains were singing and children were playing, and where shading trees latticed the grasses with counterfeit twigs and branches. Just ahead of us was a woman with a pretty big market basket on her hip, and so heavily laden it threw her out of position. Her step was springy, and she had a thrifty, housewifely air about her, as if she loved her husband in a wholesome, unemotional way, and was proud of the tiny home somewhere, where she scrubbed her own floors and did her own washing, and nursed her own babies and was serenely ignorant of such affairs as protoplasm, or socialism, or the respective claims of realism and romance in fiction, or the advance of any science higher than that of housekeeping.

Upon the top of her cabbages were piled a few bananas and some yellow oranges with Sicily in their cheeks. "Gimme one, please, mam," cried a street urchin, tumbling in her path, and

she put her horny hand with its furred forefinger into the basket and handed out a generous alms to the frank young beggar.

"But some persons cannot help being commonplace, Wallace," said I.

"Dear lady, commonplace folk are not always nor often those who lead narrow lives. Look at this woman walking before us. Manifestly hers is a commonplace life—a sort of demnition grind year in and year out at coarse housekeeping duties. Some grand people, who count it a great virtue to be refined and intellectual, who pride themselves—or pardon me, yourselves—on your dilettanteism would probably feel genuinely sorry for her because she is not up to Wagner, or Browning, or Turner, or Darwin. Note how she sniffs the air, how her gaze seems to go deep up into the skies every now and then; remember how she smiled and answered that beggar brat, how she handed a cabbage leaf to that cart horse at the corner, how she looked at the opulent occupant of that willow-swan of a baby carriage—oh, that woman is far from leading a narrow life."

"Any life must be narrow that goes on without the delights of opera, theater, books, magazines, the companionship of intellectual people, the thousand and one attractions of really good society."

"Madame, if I were a beggar or a man in need of receiving some great favor at the hands of some unknown person, I should honor with my

patronage that individual he or she, who is capable of eating an elaborate midnight supper. Mind, it is not necessary that the supper be eaten, but my selected patron must be capable of eating it. The really strong people, the really virtuous, the really broad and liberal, are those who are capable of the vastest amount of pleasure and good or evil action, whose souls grow beautiful and large and white through resisting. There are many people within the circles of your esteemed 'good society,' who have books and magazines, who go to the opera and theater, who fill so-called distinguished positions, who lead, nevertheless, lives that are deplorably narrow. Culture is a custom, like a small cup of *café noir* after dinner, a custom, but not a necessity, nor that for which they would starve if it were denied them. Now shall you say that yonder woman is incapable of a midnight supper, of a night at the opera, of the mysteries of Browning, the ethics of Ruskin? Narrow-minded people dwell in palaces no less frequently than poor cottages, and narrow-minded people are those who lack feeling, lack divine appreciation of the good and bad in others. The most saddening figure in the world—the most lonesome—is that man or that woman whose ear is not the confessional at which some one reveals the deepest joys, the inner hopes, the almost intangible moods of the heart and spirit.

"A narrow life for a man or woman is a life that goes on in a shell—a surly, snail-like exist-

ence that is too selfish to witness suffering in others, even for the blessed opportunity of relieving it; that prefers no other person's comfort to its own; that keeps its tears and real smiles for that little brood tethered to its own grazing-ground. A narrow life is that which refuses to share the common heritage of joy and woe with the great unwashed; that sees no good nor any sense in anything that is not directly in keeping with its own inclinations."

"I am afraid, my dear Wallace, we know a great many folk who would be lonesome on your broad gauge."

"Oh, yes, certainly! We know Mrs. W., who boasts that she thinks long-tailed gowns are silly, and who affects to look down on women who wear them as upon frivolous butterfly creatures who will, if justice is done them, come weeping to her at the first breath of winter according to the old fable. She will continue in her rôle of a superior person to flop around the world in her hideous short petticoats, never appreciating the fact that a gracious, graceful woman trailing silken robes that are as long as her purse will allow, is, to a man at any rate, a perfectly proper and natural sight."

"I did not suppose you, of all men, ever took any note of a woman's clothes."

"The man does not live who is insusceptible to the dainty femininity of fitly worn laces and muslins. A man wants his woman to be an ant in the morning, a bird at noon, and a butterfly

at night. I am not sure but that it is the bird and butterfly in her that best enchain him. To a certain kind of man a degree removed above the clod-hopper, the narrow-minded woman who can never rise like a Cinderella from the ashes of her kitchen hearth, whose mental parings are potato parings, is a ball of lead. We forgive a woman for being frivolous; we never forgive her for being heavy and unsympathetic.

"And then," continued Wallace, as we took seats on an iron bench, "we know, you and I, the narrow-minded Christian. Somebody says the paucity of Christians is astonishing, considering the number of them. Mrs. X. is, I dare say, at this moment on her knees thanking God she is not like you and me, and we are thanking ourselves we are not like Mrs. X., who will not eat meat on a Lenten Friday, or during this forty days consent to enjoy life in any way. In her case an excess of ritual is not an access of goodness. She keeps Lent with penances that are easy, if unlovely in themselves, and that only serve to scratch the skin of her temper and render her presence somewhat in the nature of a sackcloth and ashes to her friends and family.

"How small a way it seems to be content with remembering a fasting, suffering Christ by merely denying luxurious food to one's own stomach when one's hands persistently refrain from doing good! A Lenten life made lovely with good deeds, with gracious acts, with kindnesses bestowed, has more of spiritual beauty in

it than is conveyed by any offended, pampered stomach denied its usual rations of ragouts and roast turkey. Why not spend the days in making sad ones less sad, as well as in saving the dinners by doing without meat? She may boast that she keeps Lent by three church services a day. Is she equally faithful at the bedside of the sick, in the home where solace is needed and where her thoughtful care of others, her gentleness, her unvarying sweetness, may shed sunshine and content? She abstains from butter and savory puddings — does she also during Lent abstain from gossip, from the suggestive, defamatory shrug of her silken shoulders? After all, hers is the really narrow life, for she is a bread-and-water Christian, not a smiling, comfort-giving, humane, unselfish Christian, whose Lenten penances consist as much in doing good as of doing without meat and with oysters, fish, and omelet soufflé.

"And we know another narrow-gauge individual who finds this world too small to hold himself and you and me. He is jealous if we are equally successful with himself. He lives on the principle of every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost, in this gigantic game of grab. He cannot rise superior to the individual. I might be, in his judgment, the best man for the place, but he would see me hanged before he would let me have it if my wife had ruffled the shallows of his wife's temper. He would not help you unless you had first helped him. He

has no spontaneous generosity, and his sympathy is only to be caught in the rebound. He maps out his life, regulates his affairs, distributes his awards of merit according to the very small pattern of his own likes and dislikes. His, he admits, is the only point of view at life, but it is through an infinitesimal pin puncture. He brings no genial friends to his home, and entertains only unbidden guests. He goes to the opera, but there is no music in his soul. He reads good books with the outer film of his eyesight. God help him! for in the midst of plenty he starves, and you and I are more sorry than he for his increasing attenuation, for the gaunt and bony structure that hides no longer his lack of soul. I am more sorry for this fellow than I am for the women who starve and lead enforcedly narrow lives—narrow, that is, from your point of view."

"I must still admit that I think it real tragedy for a woman to be chained to a dull and sordid life when her soul and brain longs for something higher and better."

"Doing without, dear lady, is nothing like the tragedy of not needing nor longing for higher and better things. Do you not remember that great song of Jean Ingelow, one verse of which runs:

When I remember something promised me,
But which I never had nor can have now
Because the promiser we no more see
In countries that accord with mortal vow.
It makes me grieve to think on this—but yet
My better days are not the days when I forget.

"What life is so sad as that of a rich woman who has no desire to do good with her money—whose nature simply resists and denies the claims of any others on her—to whom it is a real sadness, a real unlovely sacrifice to spend money except upon herself or her own? That woman who walked before us a little while since, who gave away her Sicily oranges and stooped to chuck that millionaire's baby under the chin, not because it belonged to a millionaire, but because it was a baby and she was a mother, has something in her that we must sigh for and strive to attain. That woman has it in her to laugh with a street ragamuffin, to rage at the sneaking lie of a hypocrite, to kneel and pray beside a dying thief or a fallen woman, to shed tears with a strange mother who has lost her child. She may not know your Browning, nor your thousand and one attractions of a really good society, but she has that in her—that divine, all-beautiful sympathy which makes her in my eyes one of ten thousand and altogether lovely."

"Oh, Wallace, and you said that a man never forgave a woman for being an eternal Cinderella."

"It is the soul of a Martha he cavils at, madam. Remember Martha, oh, ye women, and be wise! You cultivate your music, your muscles, your bangs, your complexion, your friends, your opportunities—why not cultivate your souls? Souls grow like Annunciation lilies—if you will it so—if not they wither, and when the Gardener comes He finds a shriveled stalk, a useless weed

where He had planted a beautiful flower. You need not be ashamed of a cheap gown, of an unpretending home, of a simple dinner; you should be ashamed of undue frivolity. Cast out the swine in you and let it run raging down into the sea as devils did of old, for folk will not be found to pelt you with pearls. If you do not do this much you will be let alone—you will be left out from many tender and sweet and comforting relations in life—from intimate confidences, and yours will be the ultimate fate of one alien to all countries, all races, all hearts of men."

"Wallace, I do not understand how a man or woman with a mean soul to start with can have it grow better."

"Take it out of doors. Feed it with God's sunshine of men's smiles and women's tears. Let it see the blue skies. Take it to the theater, to the bedside of the sick. Take it anywhere away from the hard, resisting shell of your own callous, selfish habit. Do this, not only for yourself, but also for your child, whose character and hope of heaven is forming under your thoughtful hands. Every mother instills the small courtesies of polite society into her child. Even her baby boy, just learning to think, has already learned the outward manner of a gentleman, and doffs his tiny cap when he comes into the presence of Woman, and takes on readily the manly and chivalric behavior that is charming in young boys or old boys. Why does this wise guardian not go further, and teach him that there is some-

thing more beautiful than manners and that is the soil from which good manners spring. Let her train his soul to purity, his heart to sympathy for others. Let her teach him that the fabric of his soul is as pure as the petal of an Easter lily, and that if he wills it so he can preserve its beauty unspotted from the world.

"My dear madam, I have worn you out; but allow me one last word. Give me for my real friend, for my best companion, my truest confidante, that man or that woman who can eat a midnight supper, laugh at comedy, cry with tragedy, and who prays, not with lips edges, but from the heart, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'"

THAT KISS.

THAT KISS.

The good-natured cynic and looker-on at life has long ago discovered for himself that a kiss is a little parcel that sometimes comes by male but never by post, and that it is a sign not only of love, but deceit, of friendship no oftener than of affection. The recipient of a kiss is quite as likely to have a spurious, imitation one palmed off on him as the blind beggar is to receive a counterfeit coin from some brutal jester. The cynic knows this, and does not take much stock in kisses, but somehow, to-night, he finds them, real and false, woven in with his midnight thoughts.

It is a New Year's eve, and this old fellow, too old to be kissed by anybody, sits before his fire, smoking and waiting to hear the midnight bells ring in the New Year. There is no reason why an old, *blasé* fellow, the best critic of a ballet that ever cried "bravo," the best brewer of punch, and the cleverest *raconteur* of his club, should be waiting up all alone to hear the New Year's psalm of life, but when he was a boy at home they used to watch the New Year in, and somehow the thought of the old familiar habit comes

[illegible] sees [illegible] warming his heart as a [illegible] in the grate.

[illegible] this old fellow, musing his [illegible] before the ruddy blaze, warming [illegible] and the gaslight going over the room [illegible] brightening and beautifying [illegible]. Could any picture of home [illegible]? Could any arms be more loving than the soft, spacious arms of his cushioned [illegible]? Any smile more glad than the [illegible] flames in his hearth? Could children's [illegible] sound more cheery than the bubbling and [illegible] of the little teakettle before the fire? Could eyes shine brighter than the crystal glasses [illegible] well-stocked sideboard? Could any kiss be sweeter than—well, well, how long ago it is since Love kissed him? It was when he went away from home for the first time: when he exchanged forever the foolish joys and innocent amusements, the unworldly ways of home for the leather and prunella of the big, vain, greedy world.

That kiss—the kiss Love gave him to speed him on his way—he feels it yet upon his withered, shaven, trembling old cheek. The world holds nothing so pure and unselfish; and the old cynic turns uneasily in his chair, and he falls to thinking on that far-off evening. She had followed him to the door, gently pushing back the clamoring young ones, for her boy was leaving home for the world, and it was her place to go with him on his unused way as far as she could.

So she clasped his hands in hers, and together they went down the narrow garden path under the tall lilac bushes that rained down a little brown crown of dried leaves on her pretty head; and there, at the gate, under the quiet skies, with tears and divinely unselfish smiles in her tender eyes — her gentle, doe-like eyes — Love put her arms around her boy and gave him, with tremulous lips, her last, pure kiss.

What love was hers, what pride, what faith! Could this old fellow, toasting his slippered feet before the ruddy blaze fathom the pure depths of that tender heart? Oh, yes; I think so; and when he looks back over all the years, with all their sweet and bitter harvests of experience, all the worldliness and scheming, the speculation and flirting, and frolicking and dissipation, the nights at the club and days at the stock exchange—he sees beyond it all that gentle young mother of his standing by the garden gate; and now, when it is too late and he has only "dear remembered kisses after death," he knows, as he could not know then, all the depths and pride and loyalty of her love.

It is New Year's eve; an actress walks slowly from the theater to her transient home in a hotel, where she sleeps, where her trunks are, and where her child's picture will smile on her from out its velvet frame. She is tired, and the little leather grip in which she carries her jewels and stage gauds weighs heavily in her hand. As she comes under a street lamp she bends her head so

that the curious men may not see the hard lines of make-up still on her face. Away from home, one of a strange, striving crowd of men and women, with the words of the play, the throb of the music, the thought of the new year and the longing for home all tormenting her brain, she too finds a kiss tangled up in her thoughts. It is that mockery of mockeries, the stage kiss. Other women may take their little children in their arms on this last night of the year, and cover their dear faces with kisses, but what has she? That piece of coarse scene painting, that bit of deftly devised art, that counterfeit coin of imitation love, the stage kiss.

The theater had been full, the play went well, and she herself had died beautifully in a silk crape gown direct from Paris. In the last scene, when she had lifted her artistically tangled head and had given and taken the stage kiss of dying love, the house was so silent you could have heard the ghost walk. And you did not always hear the ghost walk in that company.

Well, it made a pretty tableau. It ought to have done so, heaven knows, for they had worked over it enough, and rehearsed it often enough, timing the kiss with the nicest exactness. How could the audience know that he was thinking of his cue and she of her draperies, and that both were hating the sight of each other's smeared red, white, and black faces, and dreading the *finalé* of that stage kiss?

Oh, go to your sleeping-place in the strange

hotel, tired worker, and may God send you sleep and a happy New Year. Put up your cap and bells, and wash the grease paints off your cheeks and out of your eyes with the end of a towel, and then creep off to bed. You are not the only play actor, and yours are not the only hollow and counterfeit kisses. Judas stalks the streets, Hamlet's mother betrays her king, and Regan and Goneril smile false smiles into old Lear's eyes, and "Forget-me-not" is not always played in the theater, my dear, but sometimes out in the world where all the mad bells cannot ring out the false nor ring in the true!

Under the mistletoe on this New Year's eve two women stand and kiss each other. It is a pretty tableau, and they know it and worked for it. How charming are their satin gowns, and how generously they display plump arms and fair bosoms. It would take the eye of a cynic or a play actress to detect the delicate shadings under their eyes, the rouge on their rounded cheeks, the cream of lilies on their full throats; but it is there, and when they kiss rouge touches rouge, just as vanity confronts vanity, and insincerity meets insincerity. They have given each other the social stage kiss—hating it—afraid of each other; yet suave and oily to the last, they separate, only to detract from each other's virtues and add mountains to each other's vices. Oh, the paint may be thicker and the make-up bolder behind the footlights, but the real imitation kiss —the kiss of profoundest convenience, jealousy,

and vanity— is the theatrical kiss that is given under the auspices of good society and under the mistletoe, with all the trite good wishes and compliments of the season.

It is almost midnight, and down in one of the noisiest quarters of the town, in a public dance hall, a cheap concert drowns every other sound of the night. The glasses clink on the beer-slopped tables, the music blares, and up on the stage the poor, pitiful caricature of a good, loving, home-tending woman, with a painted face and short skirts, is singing one of the Strauss' waltzes. Her voice is cracked, shrill and bold. It sounds like the shrill voice of a street gamin with a subtle note of deeper experience in it. The noise and fictitious beery enthusiasm increases, and at its height two men stagger to their feet and salute each other with a kiss. It is not a lovely sight. They are full of beer not friendship, and they travesty one of the most touching spectacles in the world. To see an old father put his weak arms around the neck of his strong, manly son, and kiss him, and to see that son, equally loving, return the kiss, is as pretty a sight as to see a young mother kneeling down to kiss the red, wet mouth of her sleeping babe. Never laugh at the sight of two men kissing unless they are full of beer, and then you will wish to turn your head away and weep.

Under the mistletoe Judas stops to give her kiss. The cynic insists that the nineteenth century Judas is a woman. Evil is in her heart, and

her lips are poison. Some one has called them "coral reefs." They have wrecked happy families and killed wives' hearts. With a kiss Judas steals the clerk's situation, the girl's lover, the rival's confidence. She kisses with the lips that to-morrow will speak harm of you, or that will be dumb if defense of you is needed, or that will smile at your disaster. When Judas goes under the mistletoe let innocence beware, let fond love take fright and gathering up her young ones flee away.

In a cheery little home on New Year's eve a gentle mistress sits waiting. She is the home fairy and the fire-tender, and it is her mission to keep the torch of love lighted. Who ever saw her fretful or jealous, or anything but smiling and cheery? Her bright eyes were lighted at the torch of love, and when she lifts her face to yours she gives you the fond kiss of the wife who knows herself beloved. What matters whether she is pretty, or witty, or distinguished, or fashionable—would you exchange her for any professional beauty, any celebrated author, any great artiste? She is the one little woman in the world for you; her meek eyes are your inspiration; her quiet smiles give you content, and the caress of her pure lips is the sign of her love, and the reward of yours for her.

On the New Year's eve a mother lying on her couch waiting to hear the midnight bells "ring out the old, ring in the new," folds in her arms the sleeping form of her little child. What a

tender, fragile little creature she seems, even love might crush her unawares. How sweet is the breath of her little red mouth, how satin-soft her cheeks, and the pure, peaceful brows are like a Madonna's under the bands of her fair hair. Sometimes there is a look, a shadow, a light, a something undefinable on the face of a sleeping female child, as if in faint premonition of its coming fate. There was such a look on the face of this child, but it was a gentle sign, and the mother sighed and smiled as she saw it. How hard it must be to go out of the world leaving such a little one as this lamb without a shepherd. What Christian pity scantily shown, what Christian charity sparsely given, could comfort the child for the lost mother love. She flings her heart down for the child to live on; she shelters it with her arms, her whole body from every rough wind of heaven. Surely, surely, God lets dead mothers come back to protect and love and comfort their little children who are crying in the night.

And then the bells rang out for midnight—"rang out the old, rang in the new," and the New Year's psalm of life began for every one. For the old bachelor cynic clasping the arms of his cushioned, crimsoned chair, for the tired actress rubbing grease paint out of her eyes and thinking of home, for the two false-hearted society women posing under the mistletoe, for the poor little painted singer in the vulgar variety hall, and the two beery men kissing and wishing

each other joy, for the evil Judas and the little fire-tender, for the mother and the child sleeping in her arms.

As the last echoes died away the mother gathered the child closer, as if she would never let it go, and whispered: "Keep her unspotted from the world, O God!" And then, with pure sweet lips, Love, the Mother, bent and kissed the child upon her meek and beautiful brow.

CIC'LY'S STORY.

CIC'LY'S STORY.

One midwinter day, not long ago, I was detained at the unprosperous, unfrequented little inn called the "Travelers' Rest," which is the sole fragment of metropolitan importance belonging to the trade-forsaken, interior little village of Bayouville. I had arrived from some still more interior depth of the country, and was prepared to possess my soul with patience until such time as the lumbering old mail-coach should be ready to set out for the railway station twenty miles away.

The landlord of the "Rest," who had been engaged in the triple occupation of chewing tobacco, whittling a pine shingle, and cooling his heels on the broken balustrade of the front porch, got down from his lazy perch, and himself ushered the way into the parlor. As we crossed the black entry, he said, in a whisper: "There 's a queer character in there. She came from out the swamp, and says she 's going down to New Orleans. I can 't get nothing out of her except that she wants to get shet of the hull county." With this he opened the door and ushered me into the waiting-room.

The parlor was a clean, wholesome apart-

ment. The wide-planked floor had been freshly rubbed with powdered red brick, the gritty particles of which crunched uncomfortably under foot. The fireplace was piled with pine logs, and the room smelled sweet as a newly-tapped turpentine orchard. The windows, rattling in the wind, were curtainless, except for the frostbitten Madeira vines clinging to a network of cords across the outer sashes.

The outlook was off straight into the forest, where the pines grew so thick that they almost seemed to be a gray, wooden curtain hung down from the luminous sky.

At one of these windows, bolt upright on a splint-bottomed chair, sat a young woman. Her coarse garb and a certain intangible environment of manner denoted the backwoods woman. Her face was turned forestward, and a deep-set, introspective gloom brooded in her somber eyes.

She was tall, and full of figure, the last a trait of physical comeliness not common to the women of her locality. Her face was a noble one—large, firm, full-featured, intelligent, with wide gray eyes, black, straight eyebrows, and a powdery dusting of brown freckles on the bridge of her nose and under her eyes. Her chin was full and almost square. A lot of rumpled brown hair, growing with plenty of curly tendrils like a vine, was gathered in a knot at the back of her head. She wore a plain blue cottonade gown, gathered at the waist on a broad band, and in place of a collar a blue bandanna handkerchief

was tied at her neck. From out its loose drooping folds her throat, almost too full, rose like a short column of brown marble. The girl had a matronly look about her, that indescribable look that made one guess it was not long since her large arms had cradled a young one of her own. A Shaker bonnet lay on the floor at her feet, and a rumpled band of black crape was pinned on her breast.

This was Cic'ly—Cic'ly, whose home was twenty miles inwards on the banks of Black Snake Bayou, who had never before in her life been to Bayouville, who had never seen a stage-coach nor heard the hoot of a locomotive, and who did not know that the wizen, decrepit, one-pedaled, and entirely antediluvian piano in the corner was a piano, but who, when the supreme tragedy of her life had faced and vanquished her, had risen from her battlefield and fled to lose herself forever in that uncomprehended somewhere that lay beyond the bewildering methods of Bayouville.

Cic'ly sat motionless by the window, and took no heed of the other occupant of the room. Once she raised a large brown hand and drew it across her face, as if bidding thought be still. She looked a being for whom all the motions of life, like a broken clock, had closed forever. That of her which must go on living was just insensate clay. Her heart was somewhere, dead. Despite her fine face, her statuesque throat, she looked the essence of commmonplace forlornity

and when she spoke her voice was a sodden, sullen, nasal monotone. "Yes," said she once, in answer to a question, "I hev been a settin' here and a settin' here till I 've most tuckin root, but I reckin' to git shet of this place some time or ruther."

It was not easy to imagine that this hopeless woman, in the coarse country garb, had touched the highest limits of joy and woe, and that now in getting "shet" of this strange bit of a town, she was turning from the ashes of a deserted hearth to seek sanctuary and asylum in the world. This is the story of Cic'ly's life:

Twenty miles back of the village of Bayouville, Black Snake Bayou winds sluggishly in and out through a perennial wilderness that is only occasionally checked by a few fields of feeble cotton. The soil over all this country, where there is not too much water to admit of soil, is but a thin, miry layer of yellow clay that resists the advancement of emigrant agriculturists with a hostility no less potent than that exhibited by the few sallow-faced individuals who are indigenous to it.

It is probable that the highly creditable census returns have been mere friendly guesswork on the part of some rural statistician, who, stumbling blind on the sagacious idea of always putting the best foot foremost, favored the county by a complement of population utterly incompatible with the dense pine groves, the stretches of black swamp, the semi-occasional cotton patches, and

the demi-semi-occasional log cabins set here and there in small clearings.

In at Bayouville, whose few residents, congregated by social instincts, rather than municipal authority within certain prescribed limits, fondly imagine themselves possessed of a distinctly citified air, imposed by an angular pantheistical meeting-house, the post-office, grocery store, and saddler's shop, all in one, and the beforementioned "Travelers' Rest," the denizens of the country about are referred to as "po' white trash."

Once or twice a year a few of those modern American Columbuses—the peddlers—penetrate these inner wilds, buying up eggs, chickens, pelts, and leaving a trail of tins, calico, blue mass, and patent medicines. Occasionally one or two of the most thrifty farmers owning carts, hitch up their under-sized, half-wild little cows and oxen indiscriminately, and haul the crops in their locality off to town or the nearest cross-roads store. The majority of the people, however—particularly the women—are born, raised, marry, have children, die, and are buried, without ever having realized the fabled grandeurs of "town."

An itinerant preacher, whose really professional calling is that of a saddler, with bench in the Bayouville Post Office, makes a quarterly round of the district, holding hysterical meetings in store, school-house, or log cabin, and, when none of these are available, in the mighty temple and sanctuary of the woods, with no roof nearer than the smiling skies bending above.

On the occasion of a "preach," folks would gather from miles around. They would be coming for two days before meeting-time, in carts, riding two, and sometimes even three, on one dejected little mustang brute, and many more patiently trudging through the woods, loaded with food, quilts, and babies.

These devout pilgrims did not fail to turn the occasion of each journey to their movable Mecca into one of joyous feasting and frolics. Those who had come from afar were made welcome to the cabins nearest the meeting-place. The air resounded with the vociferous, hearty "Howdys" from friends and relations long separated, and with the yelping of dogs and crying of children. The coffee-pot stood brewing before the coals from morning till night, and the mistresses of these hospitable, if humble homes, apologizingly allowed as how they was just out of "sweetnin'," but with generous hand they made it up to the hungry ones in pellucid chunks of fried fat, known as "hawg's meat," in potatoes yellow as gold and sweet as sugar cane, and in tasty ash cakes.

At the above-mentioned twenty-mile point on Black Snake Bayou the red and yellow earth is upreared into a rugged hill, at the foot of which are the deep, steely pools of the stealthy, repellent river. On the top of this hill, overlooking the piny woods for miles, until they melted to a gray mist in the distance or were merged into the gloom of that fearful, unknown region of Snaky

Swamp, stood a cabin locally known, although the nearest neighbor was five miles off, as "Ruggles'." The cabin was a regular backwoods' home, built of loblolly logs and plastered with mud. There were two large rooms, separated by a hall or entry, open at both ends, and producing an architectural effect not unlike a pair of saddle-bags. A rickety porch crossed the front of the house. There were no windows in the house at all and no openings save the two doors, which, as they both gave on to the entry, kept the smoky-smelling rooms in a perpetual dusk of twilight. A ragged cotton field trailed off behind the house, and a few pigs and chickens were viciously rooting and clawing in an unpromising potato patch. The well was in the front yard under a sweet gum tree. Everywhere else, except toward the Bayou, the gray pine forests were extended.

The Ruggleses were considered the best to do people in Black Snake neighborhood. The preacher always put up at their house. Cic'ly Ruggles wore shoes and stockings on week days, an exhibition of feminine finery considered the essence of aristocracy, and Lysander Ruggles had said more than once that "If his women folks wanted to they could jest root hog and die in milk, bein' as he had nigh fifty head of cattle roamin' loose in the swamp."

It was the day before the fall "preach" and signs of great bustle were apparent at Ruggleses. Smoke poured from both chimneys and sparks

spangled the frosty air. The bare rooms were swept almost to desolation, and the narrow mantel shelves were set out with bunches of flaming goldenrod, to the disgust of Cic'ly's mother, who had a not uncommon rural horror of such belitterment and wood truck. In addition to the event of meeting, the morrow was to be signalized by the wedding of Cic'ly Ruggles and Lum Cherry. By that mysterious telegraphy that no man can describe, the whole country had been made aware in a couple of days that Cic'ly and Lum were going to step off, and the unbidden, but no less welcome guests, were swarming in *via* all the cow-paths of the forest. Both rooms were full of company, and the space in front of each huge fire-place was piled with fat, sleeping babies, and lean *ditto* hounds. Sallow-faced, fair-haired women, with that dragged-down look that comes of hard work and too many children, sat around on benches and stools, and smoked and gossiped, and with a friendly desire to help Emeliny Ruggles, minded the skillets full of hog meat, sizzling dangerously near to the babies and dogs. Naturally, the bride and groom were the favorite subjects of conversation. It is almost impossible to describe to one who has not heard it, the mellifluous, soft, easy-going accents of these women; their voices were invariably low, mellow and words lingered reluctantly on their lips. The darkest corners of the cabin were red with light. The big table, at which new-comers were constantly appearing for a bait of victuals, was pushed

against the wall, and even its pile of stone china plates and yellow bowls and half-emptied crock of stewed pumpkin did not lessen the appearance of cheer and homely comfort. Once in a while a dog pulled down a greasy platter and some voice would be raised with a "You git out from there, Lige!" that Lige paid not the least attention to, and the remonstrant returned to her interrupted confab with renewed interest.

"They tell me Cic'ly's got a new muslin dress to be married in," remarked Melindy Allen. "She's powerful well favored, but I reckon new duds 'll make her look pretty 'nough to eat."

"Cic'ly can 't look no way but pretty. She 's got dredful nice ways of talkin' an' bein' polite. She 's skittisher 'n a young colt though." The last speaker was an elderly lady who had formerly kept a perambulating eating-house for the slowly migrating railroad hands off beyond Bayouville. Her powers of acumen were tacitly conceded to have been accentuated by her larger experiences of life. Once when a young girl, she had made the trip to 'Orleans on a charcoal schooner. This, and the fact that her seven children were named out of story papers, made her, so to speak, the intellectual autocrat of the Swamp. Mrs. Hicklin ruminated with one eye fixedly staring in blind abstraction at the nearest skillet. She gave her right eye tooth vigorous rubbing with her dogwood snuff-brush and continued, "I can't get the hang of Cic'ly Ruggles, no how."

"What 's the matter with Cic'ly?"

"Well, she 'pears to take this marr'in' as solemn as ef 't was a buryin'. She 's dredful in earnest. How comes she to be marr'in' with Lum Cherry beats me all holler."

"Ef ever thar wuz a sickly-looking puke it 's Lum," assented Mrs. Allen, with cordial interest. "Them Cherrys is all a white-livered, ratty lot. Cic'ly's got to look out fer him. He 'll tote fair enough an' far enough while the courtin' fever 's on him; but, jes' wait till that simmers down. 'T will be Hail Columbia, happy land, then, ef Cic'ly crosses him. Wisht you'd a-seen him tryin' to get the parson's pony inter the yard jes' 'fore you come. The colt would n't budge. He sot 'is feet and hunched hisself up an' pulled back with his hind en'; and Lum he sot 'is feet an' hunched hisself up and pulled forred with both en's. And they had it, you bet. The way he kicked that colt in the ribs and pounded him in the nose an' swore black an' blue at it, would a ben a caution to Cic'ly. I 'd a-gin a red heifer ef she seen 'im."

This prejudiced and partisan conversation was interrupted by the appearance of Lum himself. A sheepish, sallow, loose-jointed, sullen-looking man, no more fit to mate with Cic'ly, the flower of Snaky Swamp, than a hoot-owl with a lark. One of Cic'ly's brothers had just been barbering him out behind the house—an operation that emphasized those physical shortcomings that made Melindy Allen call him "white-livered and a sickly-lookin' puke." He went about the room

shaking limp hands with the ladies, and answering their soft "Howdy, Lum," with an inarticulate mutter.

Mr. Cherry's prospective mother-in-law followed him into the room, and directing him to draw up, proceeded to serve out a plateful of supper to him. The appearance of these two important personages heartened up the wicked old gossips; pleasant anticipations of the unusual event were expressed in homely jokes and solemn prognostications for the benefit of the next to the chief actor.

And Cic'ly—Cic'ly was off in the woods somewhere, "walkin' down her wonderment," she told herself. How often in her girlhood, when her strange, impotent enthusiasms possessed her, had she taken to the woods to walk it down. Is girlhood less mysterious and tender because it can neither read nor write? Are its thoughts any less holy because they are voiceless and choked for utterance? Is love less meet and fruitful because of rude clothing and a humble shrine? Cic'ly, speeding through the frosty woods, not minding how the galberry bushes scratched at her new frock, walked like a young David, with the wide, tender dusks of her solemn eyes upturned to the skies.

"I know what it all means now," she said to herself. "Every time I used to get res'less fits on me it was because I was a waitin' for Lum. When I used to slip out to the stile to look this way and that way to see if anybody was comin',

when there was n't anybody to come at all, it was jes' Lum. And when I got low-spirited and felt as if the world was comin' to an end, it was Lum agin; and when I was always a waitin' for som'fen to happen, 't was nothing but Lum." What fine young lady, the flower of culture and grace, could better have summed up the varying, perplexing emotions of being in love, than did Cic'ly, walking down her wonderment of joy in the lonesome depths of the piny forest? The dark skies seemed to part overhead, and in her halo of happiness she could see her castle —her one-roomed loblolly log cabin—that to-morrow would be hers and Lum's. She could hear how the birds sang in the sweet-gum trees, how the pines crooned. Often she had asked herself if the ceaseless soughing in the forest, the deep-toned baying of the winds, was not the noise of the outside world, like at 'Orleans, dribbling in through the Swamp; but now that everything was happiness to her—a lover, a wedding, a husband, a home—she would never again care what the crooning sound might mean. Oh! the torch of love was lighted, and Cic'ly meant to bear herself to that cabin home of hers to tend its faithful fires and keep it trimmed and burning. The next day, after the eloquent preaching—after the mitigated excitement of the mourners' bench, where, notwithstanding the intending *finalé* of a wedding, two were up to be prayed for, after the christening of Melinda Allen's last baby, preaching being too scarce to admit of any

curtailment of the usual interesting routine of religious observances—Cic'ly Ruggles and Lum Cherry were made man and wife, and that same evening, after a great feasting, Lysander Ruggles jumped his daughter up on to the pony 'hind Lum, and clasping his waist Cic'ly disappeared through the woods and was carried off to her new home on the other side of Snaky Swamp.

Of the commonplace, sordid, hard-worked life that Cic'ly lived in her new home, is it worth while to write? Of how she was up with the mocking birds and blue jays, and set her cheap home in order, cooking Lum's breakfast and standing in wifely submission till he had eaten his fill and departed, and then, more lonesome than a prisoner in his cell, sopping at her own bit of bacon and bowl of black bitter coffee, or patiently taking her place beside him in the scrawny patch to hoe, with the hot sun beating down on her pretty head, to work till the heart fainted within her and she longed, but dared not, to fly off to the dewy, sweet, silent woods to walk down the wonderment of disappointment that crowded her heart and made her full, beautiful throat ache with misery. Cic'ly had never heard of Tennyson, and the nearest approaches she had made to poetry were the doleful hymns the men sung at meetings; but if she had, I think she would have sometimes whispered to herself—

> . . . Thou art mated to a clown,
> And the coarseness of his nature shall have weight
> to drag thee down."

Like many men of his kind Lum was absolutely incapable of humane feelings. He could no more understand or sympathize with suffering or tender sentiments of joy in others than you or I can realize an aërial railway to the moon. Every beast on the place trembled at sight of him, so viciously vindictive was his moody wrath, and when his wife heard him coming, crunching heavily over the pine chips that littered the yard, she hastened the dogs to their coverts. His wife had become his chattel, his slave, less regarded than his timid hounds. Nothing in this world seemed so impossible as that Lum Cherry had ever kissed her—ever given her a single caress. She must have dreamed it, and the thought of those sweet, early days of her wifehood sent the red blood up to her brows, and made her feel ashamed and shy and as if in thought she had offended womanly modesty. Oftentimes she drew from a hiding-place in the chimney the little shell trinket box that contained her marriage lines.

I have told you that she could neither read nor write. But she would sit up and look at that scrap of paper, feeling that no matter how abased Lum might become, or how cruel to her, even to the point of turning her from his door, that while she held that bit of writing she was his wife and an honest woman. To lose it or destroy it would divorce her from him, and divorce in Cic'ly's mind was disgrace.

The utter pathos of such a tragedy going on

day after day, in a little log hut lost in the wilds of a forest is something inexpressibly sad. The few housewives in Bayouville could not have believed it possible. The passengers in the sleeping-car booming over the rails at the other side of the Swamp could not dream by looking off into the fragrant piny woods, that a woman's heart was almost breaking out there somewhere. A vicious, ignorant, loutish brute of a man, sodden with work and sullen with temper—a voiceless, patient woman, ignorant as he, yet so nobly natured that she held herself dumb rather than disgrace him and her by quarrels. These two were the two uninteresting actors. And all the while she was serving him and tending him and keeping bright the simple hearth, but the torch of love was gone out, the blackened brand was cast away. She did not even wish to see it leap into flame again.

There was but little joy in Cic'ly's heart when she held her baby in her arms for the first time and, looking down on its tiny face pressed to her bared breast, she dedicated her life in the solemn vow to the child. "As God stan's 'tween me and the devil, jes' so I mean to stan' 'tween my baby and Lum" was her oath. That Lum might care for the child and assert his claim of interest in it was a possibility that did not occur to her, and whenever the man came near them a slow wonderment that another woman would have rejoiced to see, breaking in small rifts of expression over the sullen clouds of his face,

Cic'ly would hover, like a brooding hen, over her young one, hiding its little face, denying his right to any share in her love for it or care for it. She even took to hiding it away as she did the dogs when she heard the heavy cowhide boots coming toward the cabin.

Sometimes Lum went off to the woods to burn a charcoal heap, a job that kept him away for full three weeks at a time, and then Cic'ly would taste all the sweet and innocent joys of motherhood, cradling the frail, silent little bit of a creature on her breast, and going, as of old, to the sweet woods to walk the wonderment down.

She learned to sing to her baby; she taught the timid hounds to give their heads into the small hands' uncertain carressings; her life was spent in adoration before the child. Often, in the night-times, when Lum was away, would she take a flaming pine torch—for other light she had none—and stoop with it to look closer in her baby's face, or bend her startled ear to listen for the sweet, sobbing breath that fluttered from the baby mouth. Often she gathered the pink feet in her hardened palms, so hard she could scarcely feel the satiny little morsels, and tried, with rude, worse than wordless, eloquence, to talk out her joy and wonderment. "Oh," she would cry, "they hain't never trod nowhere at all! They hain't never been set in the mud ner in the woods. They hain't never trod on nothing no more 'n a dog-rose with the dew on it hes."

Henrietty Hicklin, who borrowed a mare and went all the way 'cross the swamp just to take a look at "poor Cic'ly's young one," declared it made her throat hurt to see the way the girl just brooded and mothered like a hen over her baby. "It came with the daisies, and it 's my mind 't will go with them. It looks percisely like a daisy wilting on its stem"; and with this gloomy prophecy Henrietty rode back home again.

And Cic'ly, too; she knew that her baby's feet would never tread anywhere on God's green earth now. There had been no one to tell her, no ominous illness, no wise grannies croaking evil, but every instinct of the great mother-heart was fluttering like a bell giving forth the solemn summons. She stooped on her knees to the tiny, flower-like little face, that smiled with a wisdom and sadness inscrutable up into her own; and the mother believed that the child told her in its voiceless smile of what was coming upon her. Cic'ly would open the small palms, press them to her lips and cry: "Oh Lordy! Oh, my God A'mighty! Do n't I know it, my baby? Do n't I know I 've got to give yer up?"

One night in midwinter the sharpness of the bitter cold had broken and subsided, with the melancholy drips and drizzles of a sullen set-in rain. The dead leaves whirled from the sweet-gum tree kept up the whispering echo of a devil's dance on the porch. The gusts of wind howled like chained curs at the corners of the cabin, and drops of rain splashed down the wide

chimney. All day long Cic'ly had moved about the cabin in a state of strained expectancy, as if something was going to happen. Every minute she could spare from cooking Lum's meals she had been sitting in the dark corner with her baby in her arms, and her eyes set and staring on those tender, innocent baby eyes that smiled up into hers. The delicate, little waving tendrils of fair hair seemed somehow to Cic'ly to cling strangely to the little brow; they felt damp to her touch, and a strange, darkened shadow was about the small mouth, that even in smiling was always so pitifully sad.

She had made at night-fall a little pallet on the floor near the fire and placed the child upon it, but bending over, clasped child and pallet in the embrace of her arm. The two hounds, with tails down between their legs, and with nervous, frightened faces, stood close by Cic'ly, watching, almost as she watched, the little blue-eyed baby struggling for breath. Not a human soul besides was on the place. Lum was off to a charcoal camp. There was nobody but Cic'ly and the dogs to keep watch with the child. For hours she knelt over her young one, only stirring to cast fresh wood on the fire, and then bending lower for fear the baby eyes had missed the comfort of her face.

The anguish of death and desolation was upon her. "Oh," cried Cic'ly, "it would n't be so hard ef she 'd had things in her little life; but she had n't nothin' but me and the dogs—never

no nice baby dresses, and no baby cap—nothin' in God's world but me."

The night wore on and the rains ceased and the croaking of the frogs in the cane thickets on Snake Bayou pulsated in the silence. The hounds pressed closer to Cic'ly's side, and one of them whined anxiously, looking up into her face. The blue shadows deepened about the baby's mouth and eyes. Cic'ly seemed to hear whispers in the room, to feel a shadow beside her. She gathered the precious clay up to the ineffectual shelter of her breast. "My little child," she whispered, "my little child!"

It was about daylight when Cic'ly, the two dogs pressing to her side, stepped out from the cabin. A star, luminous, pellucid, almost dripping its golden, joyous, rich light, hung low in the silent skies. "It must be that Bethlehem star we see at Christmas," she said to herself; but her soft voice was changed to the nasal, sullen, saddened monotone, and then she sped off into the woods. Ah, there was no wonderment to walk down now, and the girl huddled her arms protectingly about the stilled, marble little form pressed against her bared breast. How careful she was to keep back the brambles from touching her burden, how tenderly she pulled the gray blanket over the little creature, and kept the white face cuddled in her full bosom.

"This wuz life," she said out loud, her voice falling flat in the dark and echoless forest. "It warn't Lum, nor marryin', nor hevin' a home; it

was only this. I was more raggeder than a dog-rose vine, and scratchy with thorns; but she was my little flower, she was my little star, shining in the night; my little flower; my little dog-rose bloom, snappit off close to the stem; my little child, my little child!" And cooing and crooning to herself, Cic'ly pushed her way by old instinct, toward home. Like every other wounded woman the place that seemed home to her was where father and mother were. And when the red sun was setting the eastern woods on fire she walked across the old familiar porch and stepped with her baby burden into the old home-room.

How sweet and lovely her baby looked when it came time to put it away forever—the star of Cic'ly's night—her flower—the wee, modest bit of flower "snappit off close to the stem." That her baby had "never had nothin' in her life" was the burden of Cic'ly's anguished, remorseful cry. "No pretty things, no toys, nothin' but a string of red haws; nothin' but me an' them dogs."

Cic'ly had pinned an old crape bow on the breast of her gown. "I jes' want to have my token," she explained to Emiline Ruggles, and she stood grim, upright, and tearless while Lysander made that little earthy nest under the sweet-gum tree in the yard. "She 'd be lonesome off from the house," said the mother, and those other rugged, uncouth hearts, touched with her divine sorrow, assented. She stood

silently by till the little billowy mound swelled over the rudely-coffined form of her baby. She watched the whining dogs lie down to guard it, and then, without a word, put off into the forest.

A day of toilsome trudging over swamp and marsh brought her within sight of the blue smoke of Lum's charcoal camp. The huge oval mound looked like some vast funeral pile, with the strange, seething noise that came from its red heart, and the long columns of smoke lingering in the neighboring oak thickets. The men, Lum and two others, sat on the ground fingering a greasy deck of cards. Lum started and stared, transfixed, when Cic'ly, like an angel of wrath, stood over him.

Her brown hair tangled, fell far down below her waist, the Shaker hood hung on her neck, the poor, pitiful bit of crape, her token, rose and fell on her breast. Cic'ly was not commonplace then, I can tell you. The three loutish, ignorant men, groveling at her feet, were thrilled with a strange awe of her.

"I have brought you my marri'd lines," said Cic'ly, her stern, far-away looking eyes seeing through Lum and off into the forests—or the skies, may be. "I give you a divorce right now. You are a free man, an' I am a free woman from now. It 's no more use to me bein' marri'd." She held up the bits of paper whose simple destruction she thought to mean divorcing and disgracing her, and tore it slowly into fragments. They fluttered in the face of Lum Cherry and fell

on the greasy deck of playing cards, then, turning, she took the road to Bayouville.

Travel-stained and muddy, Cic'ly waited in the parlor of the "Travelers' Rest." Her tired hands sometimes touched the token on her breast, sometimes brushed across her face, sometimes felt to see if her little store of money, not more than two dollars, was safe in her dress. "Yes," said she, "I 've been settin' and a settin' here until I 've most tucken root, waiting for that coach. I hope to get shet out of this place some time to-day."

OLD HOME LONGINGS.

OLD HOME LONGINGS.

The other day there landed at that wonderful place of human import, the gateway for nations —Castle Garden—an old German woman who had crossed the ocean as a stowaway on one of the German steamers. The adventures of the funny, wizened, and wrinkled little body read like a supplement to that most charming of short stories which everybody remembers, "The Two Runaways."

It seems this old stowaway had come to America when quite a young girl, an emigrant from a farmhouse at the edge of a German village; that she had gone into service and finally married a soldier lad, who was killed in battle. Then widowed, childless, and poor, she went back to work, toiling faithfully, and accepting, I dare say with the dumb, servile patience of the struggling, friendless poor, the isolation and cheerlessness of a sordid life that could find no relief in books, no solace in art, no companionship anywhere. By and by, as she began to grow old, she began to grow homesick for that low-roofed farmhouse at the edge of the dull little German village.

Somewhere I once saw or read of a picture

of a Scotch fellow named "Donald," who, in his old age, had been tempted to emigrate to Canada. He clung to his tartan, to his Scotch cap, to his Scotch ways, and while life lasted, "his heart was in the highlands." In this picture was represented the forlorn fellow, seated on the log of a new-felled tree in this new and alien land, and his faded eyes were looking out across the waters far away to the land of his sweet, longed-for home.

Who has not been at some time thus overcome by the fierce, sharp longing for the old home, for the smell of the flowers on the kitchen wall, the sound of the pigeons in their cote by the stable, for the sight of the uneven garden walks, so primly laid out and so sweet with their bindings of old-fashioned flowers.

One may not sigh for a palace so deeply and so sincerely as one on alien soil may long for a return into some cool, brick-paved, old-fashioned kitchen, where the sun streams in at a small window, where blackbirds flirt in the lilac bushes by the open door, where a fat old clock ticks wheezily on a shelf by the pink-painted cupboard, and where a cat purrs all day long in the corner. Such a homesick one will remember, as if he had heard it only last night, the music of the creaking well, the click of the garden gate, the sharp, clear treble of the village church bell ringing for vespers or the Wednesday night prayer-meeting.

There is something very sweet and touching

in the sight of an old man or an old woman, or a child or a dog, sad and homesick for the home and the life and the ways that belonged to a better and a sweeter time.

When homesickness came upon this German woman she collected her small savings and sailed away as a steerage-passenger to the Fatherland, coming at last to the little village out of which every one she had known seemed to have died or gone away. Rank weeds grew thick in the little untended churchyard which she had remembered as a peaceful, shaded place where, under billows of green grass, her father and mother lay asleep, their long hands folded primly over their breasts of dust. No one knew her and strangers lived in the old farmhouse that seemed to have strangely shriveled from its former size and grandeur; and so, her home-sickness cured, her money all gone, her dream destroyed, nothing was left her but to become a stowaway and thus seek anew the land from which she had willingly departed, so full of hope and joy and fond expectation.

Would it not be the same, dear sir or madam, if you or I should venture back into our childhood's home? Would the "blue-bottles" in the garden walk bloom so gayly, or the yellow briar roses seem half so sweet as they are now when we only dream of them in the safe, stone heart of this busy town? Who would guess from your reminiscences that you would have to stoop your proud neck to pass under the arbor

with its hanging, grape-like clusters of amethystine wisteria? Oh, it is best not to go back to the old home! Let us keep our childhood picture, and dream of the old home untarnished, pure, safe, like a sprig of sea-fern embedded in a lump of amber.

There are some dreams that it would be almost sacrilege to have realized and that are beautiful and good for us so long as they are the intangible fantasies of the brain. Let us dream of Arabella as she was in the far-off, fond young days, nor seek the acquaintance of the florid and buxom commonplace lady who waddles when she walks, and who talks not of love, sweet love, but of teething children, bad servants, and the distemper of her pet poodle.

Down in your heart of hearts is there not some casket filled with miser's gold, a secret hoarded wealth of tender memories, of sweet regret, of unfilled hope with which you sometimes cheer and solace your solitude, the possession of which makes solitude sweet to you? Do you not, in the lone watches of the night, over your fading lamp or dying candle, cherish some "might-have-been" and make yourself tragic over it? Perhaps it was Arabella, or a child, that never nestled in your arms with its sweet mouth caressing your generous loving breast, or it may have been fame or success, or some signal honor denied you, or wealth and luxurious ease lost to you. But whatever it was, this is your miser's gold! Poor heart, you may only

draw forth the casket and count your treasures in the dead of night when no man sees, when no ear hears your sighs, nor curious woman notes tears in your foolish, faded eyes.

Each one of us shelters and nourishes in the heart, unshared by wife or child or husband or fond friend, some homesick longing for a Carcassonne, or, better still, for some dear remembered joy of younger days. But do not—oh, sir or madam!—do not let us climb the mountain pass to Carcassonne; do not let us go back to the Fatherland in search of the old home, lest, like the German woman weeping in Castle Garden, we find only unfamiliar faces and shrunken walls, and must perforce come back once more into the old habitual commonplace, a stowaway, with ashes in the teeth, self-robbed of the dreams and longings that sweetened solitude.

There are men and women to whom everything seems to come; who have all joys, all successes, and who do not wait for anything. It is not possible is it, that Crœsus, with all his money, his opportunities for doing good, his ability to travel, his splendid home, his loving family and gracious wife, can have concealed anywhere in his heart a casket of this miser's gold? There is no dusky, uncertain glimmer of a sphinx in his face—none of the sweetness and travail of unsolved problems, untasted joys, are suggested in the finer lines of his face. He does not believe in waiting, and he will tell you that all things come too late to him who waits.

But there are others who, while life lasts, know only the sweet and bitter of waiting. Yesterday we were full of hope and expectation, love knocked at the door, the very orange tree had blossomed for our bridal with joy, honor, fame, prosperity—oh, it seemed sweet to be waiting on the very eve of fulfillment! To-day, there is no sun in the somber sky, hearts and limbs are alike heavy; life has no promise—only the promise of waiting for that which will never come. We sit by the window remembering things, dreaming of things, and waiting—not for joy, not for orange blossoms, not for laurel leaves, but for an old, limping, bearded man, who carries a scythe and is coming this way, reaping as he comes, and who leaves behind him only an endless arid waste, where rank weeds spring poisonous and thick above the long, heaped mounds and billows of earth!

But God does not let us wait in vain. This may be His way of refining us. There is grandeur and soldier-like nobility in the homeliest face of that man or that woman who has learned how to wait—who has learned to step into the second place and leave the path free for some other conqueror. It is a fine thing when we have learned to bear with others who, like ourselves, are homesick for an old home, longing for some joy or for the sight of the glories and splendors of some Carcassonne.

That beautiful French poem, by the way, tells of an old peasant who, all his life had been

longing to go to Carcassonne, a village beyond the wall of mountains, where the fêtes were so grand, the shops so fine, that there was no place in the whole world so beautiful as Carcassonne.

Almost every one in the village had been there, but the years went on and he was bent and gray, and still no nearer the sight of that fabled town, until one day he told a youth of his hope to see the place beyond the wall of mountains. He told all the pent-up longing of his life, all the efforts he had made to get there, and how he had always failed. And the youth laughed. Carcassonne was nothing to him, but he promised to take the old man there in the morning. But that night the old man died. He never saw Carcassonne.

And again—oh, sir and madam!—I beg you to be content with the beauty of waiting. Did you never speak more gently to some woman beside you because Arabella's young face, with its fond eyes, filled your heart as if it were only yesterday you held it between your palms? Have you never lifted some wise little lassie to your knee and stroked her gentle brow with infinite tenderness because of the little child who never nestled in your arms nor gazed into your face with eyes deep with unfathomed love and faith? Have you not, for the sake of things lost or never had, grown kinder and more generous and more thoughtful? Keep your casket and treasure of miser's gold, but, oh, do not let it make you narrow or hard and selfish and jealous!

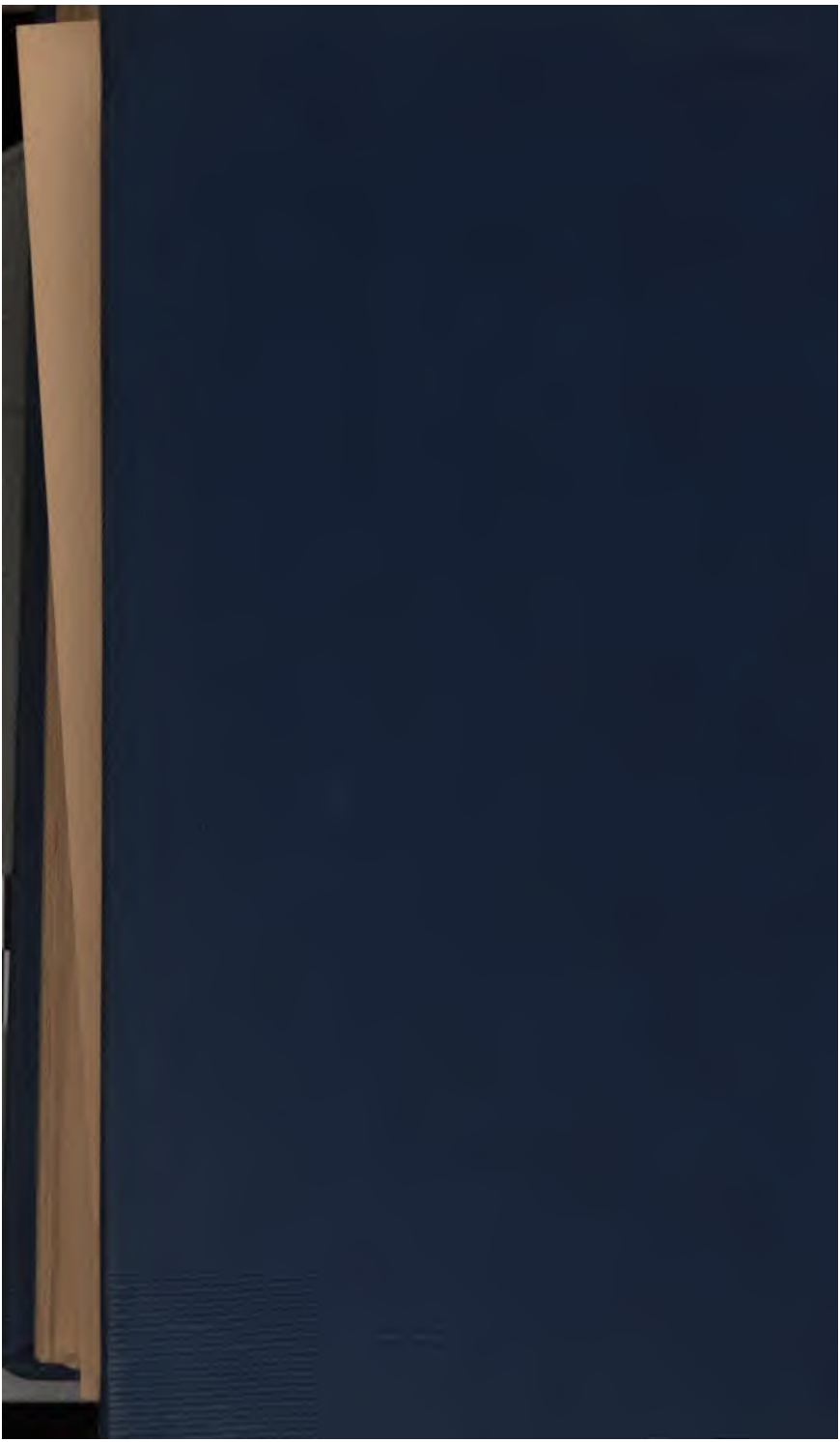
The old stowaway, sitting weeping on a bench in Castle Garden, spent and disheartened and disillusioned because of her fruitless journey, wiped her eyes and said: "It was not the same; I wish I had not gone back to see my old home." She was the finer woman delving in her neat kitchen, striving and saving and dreaming of that sweet, low-roofed farmhouse set down in its orchards. Working and waiting and dreaming refined her; hope kept her brave and strong. To-morrow is the ideal; and it is striving for the to-morrow, hoping to win its sunshine, that makes us good. To be bravely waiting through the long night, patiently standing by while others pass with laurels on their heads, or children in their arms, or ducats in their pockets—these are some of the ways in which God chooses to refine and temper the steel of our hearts.

"Who has not his Carcassonne?" runs the old French song; but when I meet you, sir and madam, in the street-car or on my way to market or home from work, we look into each other's commonplace faces and quiet eyes, and give no sign of what is in our hearts. Yet we know that sometimes, when the hour is late, the house all quiet and dying lights are low, that down on our bended knees, with tears and smiles, we open the casket and count our miser's gold.

I think, somehow, we would be ashamed to confess this to each other—it is the habit of our age to deny ideals, to disown sentiment, but we know, you and I, that there is no one so poor

who has not a casket of unfilled dreams and hopes that are as precious to him as the homesick memories of the Fatherland once were to the old stowaway.

And when I hear of one of us fading out of life—when I think of one whose tired, but patient hands are letting go, who is giving up his hold on life as a brave soldier is thrust back by a stronger foe—I am not altogether sorry, for I know that somewhere on an unknown, radiant shore—where children sing and orange blossoms and bay leaves are—he will come into possession of all his hopes and dreams, that there the long disquiet will be over, and the long waiting will be ended forever.

PRINTED BY R. R. DONNELLEY
& SONS CO. AT THE LAKESIDE
PRESS, FOR WAY & WILLIAMS,
MDCCCXCVII

JUN 1 - 1943